

GERT OOSTINDIE

IN MEMORY OF HARMANNUS HOETINK  
1931-2005

One and the same person may be considered white in the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico, and “coloured” in Jamaica, Martinique, or Curaçao; this difference must be explained in terms of socially determined somatic norms. The same person may be called a “Negro” in Georgia; this must be explained by the historical evolution of social structure in the Southern United States

wrote Harmannus – better known as Harry – Hoetink, in his seminal work *The Two Variants in Caribbean Race Relations* (1967).

Four decades later, this quotation may seem to border on the tautological. Yet at the time of its writing, “race” and essentialized racial identities were widely understood as the unchanging core issues modeling the societies of the Caribbean, and the Americas at large. Harry Hoetink was a pioneer among the first generation of post-World War II scholars who helped to rethink the meaning of “race” and color in the wider Caribbean.

Departing from a comparative historical and sociological perspective, Hoetink did not shy away from bringing social psychology into his analysis, as in his introduction of the concepts of “somatic norm image” and “somatic distance.” However much he may have been educated in a Western mold, his writings demonstrate a resolute rejection of unjustifiable generalizations based on “the ideal-typical Western homogeneous society, which unfortunately keeps producing the conceptual framework for the sociological analysis of completely different types of society” (*Slavery and Race Relations in the Americas*, 1973).

Remarkably, Harry Hoetink developed such insights as an outsider to the region. Born in the town of Groningen, in the north of the Netherlands, he studied social geography in Amsterdam and embarked for Curaçao in 1953, at only twenty-two years old, to become a secondary-school teacher on this Dutch Caribbean island. After this first arrival in the Caribbean, he immediately became an observant outsider and soon an honorary insider. In Curaçao, he met his future wife Ligia Espinal, who strongly contributed to his initiation into Curaçaoan society as well as into the society of her native Dominican Republic.

In 1958, he defended his dissertation on the social structure of pre-twentieth-century-Curaçao, written while on the island, at Leiden University. His reputation as a major scholar on race relations in the Caribbean and the Americas at large was established in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the publication of *The Two Variants in Caribbean Race Relations* and *Slavery and Race Relations in the Americas*. Moreover, in 1971 he published his seminal historical study *El pueblo dominicano* (published in the United States as *The Dominican People* in 1982). By then he had been a professor at the University of Puerto Rico (1960-64) and the director of the UPR's Institute of Caribbean Studies (1970-75), as well as a visiting professor at Yale and the University of Texas, Austin (1969). He was particularly proud of the special title of *profesor visitante permanente* conferred on him in 1981 by the Universidad Madre y Maestra (in Santiago, Dominican Republic). His writings are characterized by erudition, a comparative perspective, and a truly independent gaze; former students recollect that his teachings had the same merits.

After two sojourns in the Americas (1953-64 and again in 1969-75), Hoetink spent the remainder of his academic career, and indeed his life, in the Netherlands, serving as the director of the Centre for Latin American Studies and Documentation (CEDLA) in Amsterdam (1964-68 and again from 1975-77) and as a professor at the universities of Rotterdam (1964-68) and Utrecht (1977-83). Perhaps, in retrospect, this was not the happiest time of his scholarly life, as much of his energy was taken up with time-consuming and often tedious university bureaucracy.

Nonetheless, he continued to be a major figure in Caribbean studies by dint of a long series of articles, because of his continuing engagement with his two chosen Caribbean homelands, Curaçao and the Dominican Republic, and because of his decisive role, with Richard and Sally Price, in transforming the formerly Dutch-language *West-Indische Gids* into the *New West Indian Guide* as it stands today. He was awarded many academic distinctions as well as a high royal distinction. In 2001, he was appointed an honorary member of the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, the publisher of the *NWIG*.

Harry Hoetink will be dearly missed as a thinker, and for many of us also as a friend and *caballero*, in the best possible meaning of these words. When the concept of ethnicity made an academic comeback in the 1990s, his work retained much of its original relevance. Although he had forcefully argued against the reification of "race" and color as unchanging propositions, he also objected to the extreme constructionist readings which came to prevail in much scholarly writing of the past two decades. He did not really need to rethink his approach. As early as 1967, he cautioned in *The Two Variants in Caribbean Race Relations* that "The sociologist's exposure of racial prejudices as mere myths will not put an end to their psycho-social reality, nor will his diagnosis of these prejudices as a mere defense spell their doom. On the contrary optimism is not the most natural reaction to the race problem."

LISE WINER

## INDIC LEXICON IN THE ENGLISH/CREOLE OF TRINIDAD

### INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the contemporary component of the English/Creole of Trinidad that is derived from languages (almost entirely Bhojpuri) of India.<sup>1</sup> It begins with an explanation of the methodology of determining the 1,844-word corpus,<sup>2</sup> and a discussion of various pitfalls in determining derivations. The lexical items in the corpus are then described and categorized by sociocultural domains. The final section examines evidence for the degree to which particular words have been mainstreamed within the non-Indian population of Trinidad.

Between 1845 and 1917, almost 144,000 people came from India to Trinidad as indentured laborers.<sup>3</sup> Although immigrants came from various parts of India, the majority were from the northern India province of Bihar, and mostly spoke Bhojpuri, a language closely related to, and often identified as, Hindi (Mohan & Zador 1986, Mohan 1990). The Indian immigrant population consisted of a large majority of Hindus and a minority of Muslims. Laborers who had finished their indentureship could return to India, sign up for another contract, or remain as “time-expired” immigrants with land. Well into the twentieth century, many of these immigrants and their descendant population resident in Trinidad remained relatively iso-

1. This paper was originally presented at the Biennial Conference of the Society for Caribbean Linguistics/Curaçao Creole Conference, August 2004. For their patience, hospitality, and devotion to sharing their language and culture, I am indebted to Ena Baksh, Yasmin Baksh, Julius Boos, Uma Dwivedi, Kumar Mahabir, Sita Mahabir, Ken and Rosalind Parmesad, Kamla Ramlakhan, and the Seemungal family of El Dorado Village (especially Lakshmi, Rampersad, Rajan, Vinue, Jeewan, Asha, and Vidya).

2. Not included in this count are several items that are only possibly of Indian origin.

3. For the purposes of this paper, description and analysis apply to Trinidad, but not Tobago, which has historically had few Indian immigrants or their descendants.

lated on rural agricultural estates.<sup>4</sup> Access to English via formal schooling was quite delayed for most rural Trinidadians, and most of the early schools targeting the Indian population were run by Protestant missionaries (see Morton 1916, Ladoo 1974). It is fair to say that increased access to English education was a prime medium of the replacement not only of Bhojpuri, but Patois and Spanish as well; mass schooling led to the use of fewer languages in the community, and there was little government encouragement for the Hindu or Muslim schools that did give or might have given attention to Hindi and Urdu.<sup>5</sup>

For many in the Afro-Creole population of Trinidad, the Indian community remained separate and mysterious; but by 1995, when the first Indo-Trinidadian was elected prime minister, the community constituted half of the population and was front and center in discussions of national culture and unity. Some of these discussions have become quite acrimonious, over questions like the amount of Indian music to be played on local radio stations.<sup>6</sup> The history and cultural practices of this segment of the population have received considerable scholarly attention.<sup>7</sup>

Little work has been done on ethnolects in Trinidad (Boodoosingh 1976, Singh 1988, Winer 1992a), although most Trinidadians would claim to be able

4. There was no prohibition on Indian immigrants speaking their native languages once arrived in Trinidad. However, as Pastner (1967) has shown, especially in rural areas, the language most likely to have been learned by a speaker of another language of India was not the most common Indian language, Bhojpuri, or even English/Creole, but French Creole, known locally as *Patois*. Patois was the lingua franca of Trinidad, particularly in rural areas, well into the twentieth century, as shown by the necessity for interpreters: "The Governor and the defendant ... came and spoke to the coolies; Mr. White was also there and spoke French [*sic*] to the Coolies" (*Trinidad Spectator*, May 28, 1848, p. 2).

5. Kirk Meighoo, Hindi and Innocent Creole Culture, *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, April 23, 2004.

6. Both requests for (more) Indian music on local stations and plans to establish "Indian" stations, are sometimes seen by non-Indians as "racialism" (Ravi Ji, To Caarray in the Gayelle, *Trinidad Guardian*, April 7, 2004).

7. For example, Niehoff & Niehoff 1960; Klass 1961 and 1991; Alladin 1970; Meosa 1971; Jha 1973, 1976a, 1976b; Ali 1975; Brereton 1979; Mohammed 1982; Ramnath 1982; La Guerre 1985; Mahabir 1985, 1991, 1992a; Clarke 1986; Dabydeen & Samaroo 1987; Birbalsingh 1988; De Verteuil 1989; Vertovec 1992; Khan 1994; Kanhai 1999; Seesaran 2002. Studies that focus on socioeconomic and political aspects of the Indo-Trinidadian community are not addressed here. There have been several studies, some comparative, on the Indian community of Guyana, which is similar in many ways to that of Trinidad (including Cross 1972, Dabydeen & Samaroo 1987). It would also be worthwhile to make direct comparisons of the Indian communities in Fiji and Mauritius, where there is apparently a greater rate of survival of Indian languages (Meighoo, *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, April 23, 2004).

to distinguish certain ethnic and/or social class types of “twang” or accent, identified by names such as “Indian,” and “convent [school].” Some potential ethnolects, such as “Creole” or “Afro-Creole,” seem instead to be more dependent on other factors, such as residence or religious affiliation.<sup>8</sup> For example, the extensive Yoruba lexicon associated with the Orisha religion is mostly used by Afro-Creoles, but by no means all or even most Afro-Creole Trinidadians outside this system are familiar with more than a few of these terms (Warner-Lewis 1991, 1996).

#### METHODOLOGY OF CORPUS COLLECTION

The words in this Indo-Trinidadian lexical corpus have all been identified and collected within the framework of the ongoing preparation of the *Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad and Tobago*. To be included in this work, an item had to fulfill a number of criteria, including that it not belong in form and/or usage to recognized standard North American or British English (see Winer 1993:48-51). Several languages have contributed to the primarily English-derived lexicon of Trinidadian English/Creole (TEC), including Patois (FC), French (Fr), Spanish (Sp), several African languages including Yoruba and Twi, and a handful of words from Chinese and Portuguese. In most cases, a particular word is used more frequently within the corresponding historically ethnolinguistic group. However, to be considered part of the English/Creole language of Trinidad (TEC), a word must have been heard or seen, and judged as being used, within an otherwise entirely TEC sentence. Thus, words of Indian origin had to be acceptably used in an otherwise TEC sentence, that is, one called a “mixed-up sentence,” not only a “(broken) Hindi” one. All the words cited here were tested with at least two unrelated members of the Indo-Trinidadian community, who had to agree that the item was used in this way. Words that were characterized as only being used by people who spoke Bhojpuri fluently were omitted from the list. To date 1,844 such words have been gathered from oral and written sources, both

8. Because “Indians” have been predominantly rural and “Creoles” urban, it is not always possible to determine whether differences in language use are based on ethnicity or residence alone. However, there is a tendency for many urban or formally educated Trinidadians to assume that the linguistic differences between “urban” and “rural” are much greater or more consistent than they in fact often are. This is part of a romanticized view in which “country” or “bush” areas constitute a kind of cultural museum or repository, to be dipped into at will. If this dichotomy ever was true, it certainly is not now. With the increased reach of media, schools, and transportation, the rural areas are not as isolated as in the past; conversely, urban areas may be the locus of considerable tradition.

historical and contemporary. Literary sources were especially useful for their rich contextualization and representation of oral speech.<sup>9</sup>

#### PATHWAYS OF LEXICAL DERIVATION

The determination of the relationship and status of Hindi and Bhojpuri is a complicated and underinformed one. Although a number of scholars have long stressed that the majority of immigrants to Trinidad spoke Bhojpuri,<sup>10</sup> not Hindi, popularly the language has locally been known as Hindi, or rather “broken Hindi” or “bad Hindi.” The latter terms are partly due to the awareness that the standard Hindi heard in Indian movies, or found in Hindi textbooks, and so forth, is different from that spoken locally by older people.

More recently, there has developed in Trinidad an increasing reference to Bhojpuri rather than Hindi by scholars and popular writers, but it is standard Hindi, not Bhojpuri, that is taught in Trinidad Hindu schools. The teaching of standard Hindi as a heritage language in Trinidad is thus similar to the teaching of the standard French of France or Quebec to speakers of Acadian French in Louisiana: the language taught in school is not the language of the grandparents.<sup>11</sup> Although Bhojpuri is still a common variety for locally composed lyrics of both traditional and modern-style songs, particularly the genre known as *pichakaree*,<sup>12</sup> apart from knowledge of individual vocabulary items, songs and prayers, and modified native-like pronunciation (Mohan

9. For example, Lewis 1958, 1961, 1972; Khan 1961, 1988; Naipaul 1964, 1969a, 1969b; Selvon 1971, 1973, 1979, 1972, 1985; Ladoo 1972, 1974; Sawh 1982; Persaud 1990, 1993, and Maharaj, *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, October 14, 1990 and 1994.

10. For example, Jha 1973, Dukhedin-Lalla 1974, Bhatia 1982, Gambhir 1983, Mohan & Zador 1986, Mohan 1990.

11. Although Hindi classes are available, Meighoo (*Trinidad and Tobago Express*, April 23, 2004) notes that “even the hardcore ‘recalcitrant’ Indian activists, who energetically promote Indian culture and Indian persons in Trinidad and Tobago society, and are unapologetic – and moreover, proud – about their ‘Indianness,’ know almost no Hindi, and despite usually initial hot enthusiasm, abandon any effort to learn it ... One very prominent Indian advocate ... told me that he didn’t think he needed to know Hindi to understand Indian culture.” This has led Ravi Ji (Bhaash-puri or Hindi in Trinidad? *Trinidad Guardian*, April 21, 2004), a prominent Indo-Trinidadian leader, to proclaim that Bhojpuri was “not a taught but a caught language.” Furthermore, Meighoo claims local “parochialism” in regard to unfamiliar culture of the Indian subcontinent, from names to food. It was, however, certainly irritating to many viewers, including non-Indo-Trinidadians, that many of the actors in the 2002 film version of V.S. Naipaul’s *The Mystic Masseur* (1964) spoke with continental, not local, Indo accents.

12. See Peter Ray Blood, Pichakaree Time Again, *Trinidad Guardian*, March 28, 2002 and Indira Maharaj, Love and Sex in Pichakaree, *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, March 22, 2002.

& Zador 1986, Mohan 1990), it would be fair to say that even within the Indo-Trinidadian community, Bhojpuri has followed a typical path in which unsupported family transmission of an immigrant language does not extend to the third generation (Garcia 2003) (the same is true of local French, Patois, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic).

Hindering the effort for full recognition of Bhojpuri as a language is the fact that despite recent designation as “official” by the government of India, there are as yet no available dictionaries or grammar books of Bhojpuri. Thus, non-Bhojpuri speakers must rely on speakers of Hindi and/or Bhojpuri, as well as dictionaries of standard Hindi (Forbes 1861, McGregor 1993). In many cases, it is only possible to assume that a word is Indian in origin, and ascertain that it is not Hindi, leading to an interim assumption that the word derives from Bhojpuri, subject to future investigation.

The Indian lexical component in TEC is overwhelmingly derived from Bhojpuri, Hindi, or both, but also includes Sanskrit and Urdu (Mohan & Zador 1986, Mahabir & Mahabir 1990, Mohan 1990). Sanskrit is particularly represented in words pertaining to Hindu religion; Urdu, which is basically Hindi with considerable influence from Arabic and Farsi (Persian), is mostly found in words pertaining to Islam. Modern Hindi is also a contemporary contributor or language “reinforcement,” through standard Hindi media such as Bollywood movies.

There are very few instances of words derived from Indian languages other than Bhojpuri, Urdu, Hindi, or Sanskrit in this corpus, although considerable numbers of immigrants came from areas where Bengali, Punjabi, and Tamil (known locally as “Madrassi”) were dominant. Two of the rare exceptions are from kite-flying/fighting: *mange* /manzh/ ‘coating applied to kite string,’ which comes from the Bengali and Punjabi *manja* ‘ground glass and rice-flour paste applied to kite string,’ and Punjabi *rasam*, a similar coating. Interestingly, TEC-speakers, including Indo-Trinidadians, unanimously identify the origin of the former word as FC *mange* < Fr *manger* ‘to eat.’ In the case of *karapul* ‘small shiny flavorful leaves of *Murraya koenigi*,’ the immediate source is probably Hindi/Bhojpuri, but it may also have entered the language via Anglo-Indian *corropali* although the ultimate source is probably Tamil *karuvepila* and/or Malayalam *koduka puli*. A different route has been followed by TEC *cowitch* (or *cow-itch*) ‘any of several plants, usually vines, bearing pods with highly irritant hairs, esp. *Mucuna* sp.’ The original etymon is H *kewinch* ‘*Mucuna prurita*, a vine with stinging hairs on the pods,’ that has come into English as *cowage*. It appears that in TEC this was reanalyzed as *cow* (from association with pastures) + *itch* (from the symptom), but it is not clear whether this came directly from Hindi or via English.

Bhojpuri was the “leveling” language or koiné in the early Indian population of Trinidad, and may have been learned, at least to some extent, by non-Bhojpuri speakers who found themselves in small minorities among

large numbers of Bhojpuri speakers on estates.<sup>13</sup> This is apparently true even for the “Madrassis,” known for their *Kali-Mai puja* and *fire-pass* rituals;<sup>14</sup> thus far, the terminology found in these rituals is hardly different from that used in other Hindu environments.<sup>15</sup>

In some cases, words that clearly come from India have also been integrated (if not assimilated) into standard English. For example, the word *sari* ‘a woman’s draped garment,’ is widely known and used throughout the Indian diaspora and indeed is well known to many non-Indian English speakers. However, few if any of the original immigrant women to Trinidad would have worn a sari, but rather the full skirts and long tops characteristic of northern India.

Not all users of Indian words were Indian; words such as *sari* were already familiar to Anglo-Indians (Lewis 1991). People who had served in the Anglo-Indian Raj spoke “Hindustani” (the official version of Hindi) or other Indian languages, and acted as immigration brokers, court interpreters, and advisors to planters and politicians on Indian indenture and immigration.<sup>16</sup> Estate owners and overseers would likely understand, and even

13. Ravi Ji, *Trinidad Guardian*, April 21, 2004.

14. Keith E. McNeal, *Miracle Mother*, *Caribbean Beat* 54, March/April, 2002.

15. Similarly, there was a leveling of religious observance within Hinduism: “The localized traditions of minor deities and their associated rites were soon diminished in Trinidad in favour of a standardized, Sanatan Dharm style of Hinduism. A smaller pantheon of Sanskrit gods became dominant ... A Vaishnavite *bhakti* orientation became pervasive” (Vertovec 1992:111). Ravi Ji further proposes that there was “a conscious intervention of Hindi through the Indian High Commission in the wake of India’s Independence – when Trinidad was a British colony. For one thing, India was interested in establishing Hindi as an official language of India. The Indian High Commission in colonial T&T, may well have been influenced by the Arya Samaj which, at that time, saw Bhojpuri as a carrier of folk culture and traditions which was in conflict [with] their reformatory mission” (Ravi Ji, *Trinidad Guardian*, April 21, 2004).

16. One Major James Fagan, who had served in the Bengal Military Establishment, had a “roving commission to attend to Indian affairs in all parts of the island. He was partly a magistrate and partly a welfare officer” (Wood 1968:114). In regard to evidence taken in Calcutta of “returning coolies” it was reported in *The Trinidadian* of April 8, 1852, p. 2: “Major Fagan understood our language. If a line was drawn on the ground and milk thrown on one side and water on the other, he could tell which was which, and the other gentlemen could not tell so much in our matters.” This could affect court cases, some put aside when “there was no one who could understand the Coolie” (*The Trinidadian*, September 20, 1852). Lady Stanmore, in her diary entry for November 4, 1866 notes: “We have on board the Chief Justice of Trinidad, Wm Knox, an oldish man, certainly cultivated. He is a good Italian scholar, and has taught himself Hindee [*sic*] since coolie cases became numerous and important” (p. 45). Justice Knox also spoke fluent French and Spanish (no mention has been found of his learning any African language).



use, Indian words such as *sirdar* ‘overseer,’ *dhobi* ‘laundry-man,’ and *puja* ‘Hindu prayer service,’ in reference to Indian life and labor on the estate. Some TEC words, such as *lota* ‘brass pot’ and *locho* ‘loafer, libertine, idler’ from the Anglo-Indian form *loochoer* < Hindi *luchchaa*, can also be found in identical or similar forms in that epitome of colonial language reference, *Hobson-Jobson* (Yule & Burnell 1985).

English, linguistically classified as Indo-European, owes some fundamental debts to Sanskrit. It would, however, be perverse to insist that more than a handful of words have come directly to standard English or TEC from Sanskrit. Words such as E *jungle* < Hindi and other northern Indian languages *jangal* ‘wild forest’ were certainly well known in English long before Indian immigration to the Caribbean. Another type of wandering lexical history is demonstrated by TEC *pelau* ‘a spicy dish of browned meat, with rice, and sometimes peas.’ In the Trinidad context, the Hindi *pilau*, from Persian *pulao*, Sanskrit *pulaaka*, may have come through or been influenced by the Fr and FC *pélao*.

The Urdu element in Indo-TEC lexicon is, as noted above, associated with cultural aspects of the Muslim community, including religious observance, music, and food. The original source for most of these words is either Arabic or Farsi (Persian). Examples include *imam* < Arabic *imaam* ‘Muslim religious leader,’ *qasida* ‘style of classical Arabian poetry’ < Arabic *qasiida*, and *sarabet* ‘a sweetened beverage’ from Persian *sharbat*.<sup>17</sup>

### *Misassigned Derivations*

A number of words that have occasionally or consistently been locally considered to be of Indian derivation are in fact from other languages. The two dozen typical examples here are taken from Noor Kumar and Sita Mahabir Mahabir (1990). The relevance of two phonological principles can be derived from this list. First, all these items conform to Bhojpuri rules of phonotactics, sometimes involving changes such as the /f/ of *coffee* to an aspirated /p<sup>h</sup>/. Second, there is an emphasis on the spellings “a” rather than “u” as in *mas* ‘must’ and “aa” as in *kaat* ‘cut,’ representing both a lengthening and a raising of the vowel, considered typical of traditional Indian-Trinidadian speech.<sup>18</sup>

17. To get to Fr *sorbet* and E *sherbet*, the word went through Western Europe and the referent became frozen.

18. This process is sometimes referred to as “Bhojpurisation” of English, e.g. *hospital* to *’aspataal*, *California* to *Kalpainyaa* (Ravi Ji, *Trinidad Guardian*, April 21, 2004). The pronunciation of /ar/ as /a:/, as in “star,” is of course characteristic of British and some American English varieties.

Table 1. TEC Words Misassigned as Indian-Derived

<i>TEC Word Considered “Hindi”</i>	<i>Gloss</i>	<i>Known or Probable Source</i>
<i>bookane</i>	‘cooked by smoke’	FC/Fr <i>boucan</i> < Carib <i>boukan</i> ‘stick framework, grill’
<i>chuk</i>	‘pierce, jab’	African, compare Fulani <i>jukka</i> ‘poke,’ Tsonga <i>jukula</i> ‘dig up’
<i>dodo</i>	‘sleep’	FC/Fr
<i>gaabilaa</i>	‘chicken hawk’	Sp <i>gavilan</i> , FC <i>gabilan</i>
<i>hallaa</i>	‘noise, uproar’	dial. E <i>holler</i> ‘yell, shout’
<i>jaanjee</i>	a fresh-water fish [eel]	FC <i>zangee</i> < Fr <i>anguille</i> ‘eel’
<i>jitnee</i>	‘vehicle’	E <i>jitney</i>
<i>kaapaa</i>	‘penny’	E <i>copper</i>
<i>kaaphee</i>	‘coffee’	E <i>coffee</i> (also Indianized forms from E and possibly Arabic)
<i>kaat</i>	‘cut, bite’	E <i>cut</i>
<i>kaataa</i>	‘headpad to cushion load’	African, prob. Twi <i>katá</i> ‘cover, protect’
<i>laaboo</i>	‘mud’	FC < Fr <i>la boue</i> ‘mud’
<i>malaad</i>	‘invalid; sick’	FC < Fr <i>malade</i> ‘sick, ill’
<i>mas</i>	‘must’	E <i>must</i>
<i>meele</i>	‘brought together’	FC, Fr <i>mêlée</i> ‘mixed; mixture’
<i>paap</i>	‘soft’	E <i>pap</i> ‘soft food’
<i>paapaa</i>	‘father’	Fr/E <i>papa</i>
<i>pemwaa</i>	‘breadfruit’	FC <i>pembwa</i> < Fr <i>pain de bois</i>
<i>pooiyaa</i>	‘cutlass’	FC < Fr <i>poignard</i> ‘short sword or dagger’
<i>reeba</i>	‘river’	E <i>river</i>

<i>TEC Word Considered</i> “Hindi”	<i>Gloss</i>	<i>Known or Probable Source</i>
<i>saabon</i>	‘soap’	Fr <i>savon</i>
<i>saapaat</i>	‘footwear made of wood and rubber’	Sp <i>sapat</i> , <i>sapatero</i>
<i>swaipaa</i>	‘machete, brushing cutlass’	E <i>swiper</i>
<i>tamaakhoo</i>	‘tobacco’	< E <i>tobacco</i> , Sp <i>tabaco</i> < Amer

### *Indo-TEC Lexicon by Sociocultural Domain*

This section describes the majority of Indo-TEC lexicon, totaling 1,844 words, categorizing items by their semantic-cultural domain. Major categories include religious practice, particularly Hindu weddings and Muslim Hosay (Niehoff & Niehoff 1960, Korom 2003); music (Myers 1998); dance and stickfighting (Alladin 1970); food preparation (Indar & Ramesar 1988, Mahabir 1992b); agriculture; kinship (Jha 1973); health (Mahabir 2000); and description of appearance and behavior. In the table, *n* indicates the number of words put into this category, and % indicates the percentage of the total Indo-lexical corpus that this constitutes.

Table 2. Examples of Indian-Derived Lexicon by Sociocultural Domains

#### *Actions n = 148 (8%)*

bhoray – eat by picking up food with your fingers or a piece of roti  
 bichkaawe – grimace, distort or twist the face  
 binay – select, especially pick and choose good grains

#### *Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fishing n = 83 (4.5%)*

bacha, bachi – newly born male/female calf  
 bhopa – rattoon, new shoots from an old plant  
 bhusi – rice husk; grain seed covering  
 biya – 1. seed, grain; 2. a bundle, usually of rice seedlings  
 biyari – nursery for young plants  
 bandhnaa – a grass band used to tie bundles, usually of fodder

#### *Body (36) and Health (35) n = 72 (3.9%)*

barowni – eyebrow  
 bilni – sty, painful swelling on the eyelid  
 chaura – peeling skin on baby’s body  
 lulha – having only one able hand, the other crippled or twisted

*Clothing and Jewelry n = 79 (4.3%)*

baju – wide light bracelet worn between elbow and shoulder

bandal – tight metal bracelet worn on the forearm

bari – small hoop-shaped earrings

jora-jama/jama-jora – man's long jacket with long sleeves and a high neck

orhni – woman's scarf worn around the neck or over the head

*Cooking (n = 52) and Food (n = 168), n = 218 (11.8%)*

baelay – roll with a baelna

baelna – small thin wooden rolling pin

baigan choka – a dish made from roasted baigan (eggplant, aubergine), onions, and seasoning

barfi – fudge-like sweet made from milk and sugar

chulha – earthen fireplace

chunkay – throw seasoning into hot oil; throw hot oil with seasonings into dal

*Descriptions, Evaluations n = 116 (6.3%)*

abhimaan – false pride

aisa-taisa – commonplace; ordinary

bandar – badly behaved or stupid person

chachundar – a person who wanders about; a loose, undisciplined woman

chatak – of food, savory, tasty; of music, good, lively, having feeling

*Environment n = 43 (2.3%)*

bhowchar – light rain blowing inside the house

bihjli – lightning; thunderbolt

chowk – earthen bank on the side of a drain

gunda – clay, used in making pottery

maati – dirt, earth, soil

*Fauna n = 49 (2.7%)*

bhaisa – water buffalo

bhowraa – wasps or bees that make a loud humming noise

bhungaa – fruit fly

*Flora n = 105 (5.7%)*

balahar – *Artocarpus lacucha*, a tree fruit

banga – two species of spiny native palm trees

baigan – eggplant, aubergine

bhaaji – a number of plants with dark green leaves edible when cooked

bhankaraile – a vine yielding a small bitter fruit

bodi – a very long edible pod bean

*Folk Beliefs and Practices n = 32 (1.7%)*

bhut – evil spirit; demon

churail – ghost of a woman who died in childbirth

dih – traditional Hindu guardian spirit that protects a particular place

gadabera – time of sunset, considered an unlucky time to sleep, eat, sweep

*Games n = 10 (0.5%)*

guli danta – game played by flicking a thin stick across a circle

gudia – doll, dolly

kabadi – vigorous chasing game between two teams

*Hinduism n = 228 (12.4%)*

brahman – a high-caste Hindu, often a teacher or pandit

baraha/barahi – a celebration held twelve days after a birth

bedi – earthen altar

bhabhoot – ashes from incense

bhagwat – a week-long reading and exposition of the Bhagavata Purana

bhandara – ritual held 23-30 days after a death

bheik – ritual thread worn by devout men

brath – period of fasting because of a religious vow or holy time

*Hindu Weddings n = 60 (3.3%)*

bahoray – ritual of applying vermillion powder to the bride

barat/bariat – procession of the groom and his party to the house of the bride

bhatwan – farewell night during a Hindu wedding ceremony

bhawar ghoom – ritual of groom and bride walking around the sacred fire

bidai – clothes and jewelry given to the bride by the groom's brother

bida karaway – a ritual when the groom and bride are sent away

*Household n = 96 (5.2%)*

bartan – dishes, cups, and other cooking and eating items

chadar – bedcover, blanket

chimta/simta – fire tongs

dhenki – grinding mill consisting of two circular flat stones

*Islam n = 58 (3.1%)*

Bakra-Eid – holy day commemorating the sacrifice of Isaac

banaithi – fire-stick dance performed by men on Hosay night

gumaj – small crown placed on top of the Hosay tadjah

halal – done according to Muslim ritual, usually of slaughter of animals for meat

*Kinship n = 102 (5.5%)*

baba – father; term of respect for pandit or any older man

bahin – sister, especially younger sister

bahnai – older sister's husband

barka bahin – older sister

bhowji – older brother's wife

*Miscellaneous n = 199 (10.8%)*

baal – counting word usually of grain used for seed

bahana – mischief; trouble; excuse; pretense; lie

barakat – good fortune or prosperity, especially gained through hard work

bipat – trouble; difficulty; pain; worries

burhaa/burhiya – old, elderly man/woman

*Music, Drama, Song, and Stick-fighting*  $n = 146$  (8%)

bayān – the left-hand, lower-tone drum in a tabla set

bansuri – horizontal bamboo flute

bhajan – type of Hindu hymn or holy song

biraha/birha – improvised Hindu religious song

*Actions:* This category includes a number of terms pertaining to actions in cooking and eating, as well as to actions typical of household and agricultural pursuits, and common actions such as giggling, stealing, pushing, cuddling, grumbling, and splashing. These include mostly verbs, but also some words that are used as nouns in phrases implying an action, *dular* ‘loving attention; cuddling; affectionate snuggling,’ or *lathi* ‘stick,’ as in “He gi the man plenty lathi” ‘He hit the man a lot with a stick.’ Some word sets retain morphological differences, such as *bhun-bhun* ‘a grumble, buzz, mutter’ and *bhunbhunai* ‘to grumble continuously’; in some cases such morphology is not consistently applied, or crosses word class boundaries. Note, for example, that *barbar* ‘chatter, (talk) nonsense’ is both noun and verb, whereas *barbaraawe* ‘make unnecessary noise’ is always a verb.<sup>19</sup>

*Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fishing:* Almost all indentured immigrants were assigned to agricultural work on estates, mostly in sugarcane but also cocoa. Indians are still the segment of the population most involved in sugarcane and vegetable agriculture. The greatest single subdomain in this area pertains to rice cultivation and processing, which has always been carried out locally exclusively by Indo-Trinidadians (see Diptee 1992).<sup>20</sup>

*Body and Health:* Words for body parts follow the general pattern, also found in the African-derived vocabulary, of keeping heritage language terms for more private terms, such as *jhaat*, *jahant* ‘pubic hair.’ Several words refer to deformities or disabilities. Although health terms are relatively few, most are used widely and frequently, including words for tingling or numb sensations, respiratory problems, fevers, and growths. A specifically Indian set of medical diagnoses center on diseases considered caused by evil intent or demons, and by the “strain” or “dislocation” of “veins,” which are treated with specific traditional remedies and treatments (see Winer 1992b, Mahabir 2000).

*Clothing and Jewelery:* Quite a few of the terms collected for jewelery and the clothing worn by the original immigrants are now archaic or obsolete

19. The /e/ ending on verbs has not yet been properly analyzed, but appears to derive from the Bhojpuri /e/ verb ending for completive aspect, almost certainly because of or reinforced by the typical Patois /e/ ending for verbs.

20. See also Lena Chandool, Indian Culture and Agriculture, *Indian Arrival Day Magazine*, May-June, 2003 and Anuradha Joshi, Indian Women Pioneered Rice Cultivation, *Indian Arrival Day Magazine*, May-June 2003.

in common usage, as are the items themselves (see Raghoo 1984, Ramesar 1999/2000). Some survive, however, mostly found in connection with dance and wedding costumes.

*Descriptions and Evaluations:* A few of the words in this category are neutral or positive in meaning or connotation: *chitkabar* 'spotted, speckled,' *chikan* 'clean, in good order,' *gyaani* 'learned, erudite man,' *songha* 'mellow, pleasant smoky flavor or aroma.' However, over three quarters of these words are negative, referring to physical descriptions (*roggi* 'sickly-looking,' *malich* 'filthy, dirty,' *jhabraa* 'of hair, dirty, tangled'), emotions (*abhimani* 'false pride,' *jabarjast* 'jealous'), behavior (*puhar* 'slack, clumsy') and character (*pakhandi* 'fussy over trivial things,' *langeri* 'irresponsible, unreliable,' *dhansirya* 'woman who wastes money'). In most cases, there are English words potentially available as synonyms; however, the precision of some items, as well as the emotional strength carried by these words either by heritage use or by switching for emphasis, has supported their survival.<sup>21</sup>

*Environment:* This rather broad category includes names for types of terrain, *daldal* 'marshy or swampy place,' weather, *bhowchar* 'light rain blowing inside the house,' natural phenomena, *garahan* 'eclipse,' and features of the land whether natural or human-made, *gullaa* 'hole dug in the ground.'

*Fauna:* These designations refer mainly to domestic animals, as well as animals frequently found around houses, such as wasps. Wild animals, from mosquitoes to owls, are referred to in largely generic fashion, or with several species grouped together. This stands in contrast to the extremely rich TEC vocabulary for fauna, a considerable amount of which comes from Amerindian languages (via Spanish) and from Patois (see Winer & Aguilar 1991, Winer & Boos 1991). By the time the Indian immigrants arrived, of course, the local fauna had already been named, and the names were accessible. However, the *bhaisa*, 'water buffalo,' was imported and used extensively by the Indian population.

*Flora:* Indian names for local flora are almost entirely practical, that is, for plants that are edible, used in rituals, or used for tying crabs, making roofs or other purposes. In some cases, Indian names were made for local plants that resembled Indian ones, for example *bhandhania* 'like, similar to + coriander'

21. A similar phenomenon occurs in the retention (recognition and/or use) of Yiddish items in the English of non-Yiddish speaking Jews with Yiddish as a family or community heritage language. For example, the highest praise is to call someone a *mensh* lit. 'man,' but with connotations of integrity and other positive characteristics. Conversely, negative epithets running the gamut from ill-fortuned to malicious – *shlemiel*, *shlemazel*, *shmendrik*, *shmuck* – are considered more precise and forceful than any English (near-)equivalents, and are kept in use by their unfortunately frequent applicability.

for *Eryngium foetidum*. Again, the immigrant population arrived to find hundreds of names for local flora well established in English and Patois.<sup>22</sup>

*Folk Beliefs and Practices*: With the exception of *jharay* 'ritual removal of an evil spirit or blight,' and perhaps *jadoo* 'harmful magic,' this vocabulary is mostly known only within the Indo-Trinidadian community. Much of this is becoming archaic, but beliefs about lucky and unlucky times, and protection against harm are quite widespread.

*Food and Cooking*: Many of the words in this category pertain to cooking equipment such as *baelna* 'rolling pin,' *dal gotni* 'swizzle stick,' *tawa* 'griddle,' made locally in traditional shapes and styles, and processes that are specific to the preparation of Indian dishes, particularly of milk products and spices. The food items, from *roti* 'flat soft bread wrapped around a filling' to sweets and religious offerings, are typical of the cuisine of northern India, more of the lower class than the upper.<sup>23</sup>

*Games*: Traditional games such as *kabadi* and *lohar* are played within the Indian community, though less commonly than in the past.<sup>24</sup> Two areas that warrant further investigation are kite-flying/fighting and marble games, both of which are extremely popular in northern India. While the Indian word *patang* 'kite, kite-flying' would be used only among some Indo-Trinidadians, the Indian-derived *mange* and *rasam*, for coatings used to help cut opponents' kite-strings, are so widespread amongst kite players that, as noted above, most consider the first term to be Patois (i.e. from *manger* 'to eat'). There is a possibility that some marble-game terminology, such as *lerki* 'a type of ring game,' is Indian in origin.

*Hinduism*: This category includes a large number of words relating to Hindu belief and practice, specifically to ritual procedures, objects and items, and observances for particular circumstances such as birth and death, as well as various types of prayer services (religious song types are included in the "Music" category below). Some of these are associated only with one specific holiday, such as the *pichkare* (syringe) used during *Phagwa*, some are commonly found at a wide variety of activities and items, such as *bhabhoot/vibhute* 'ashes from incense.' Although the caste system broke down fairly rapidly, and the full panoply of Hindu observance was not maintained, activities such as *pujas* and communal festival observances were important and fairly public components of social-cultural and linguistic maintenance. Hindu weddings, which traditionally are very complex and take considerable time, were

22. See Lackhan ca. 1983-86, Mahabir 1991, and Francis Morean, The Stately Banga Palm, The Ground Itch Bush, and Plumbing the Shado-beni Mystery, all in the *Trinidad and Tobago Review*, November 1990, April 1992 and June 1992, respectively.

23. See Pariag 1975; Raghoo 1984; Indar & Ramesar 1988; Mahabir 1992b.

24. Noor Kumar Mahabir, Disappearing Ancient Indian Games of the Caribbean, *Trinidad and Tobago Newsday*, August 15, 2003.



also crucial in this regard, although such rites were not recognized as legal by the colonial government until 1946 (Muslim marriages were recognized in 1936).<sup>25</sup>

*Hindu Weddings:* Terms relating to Hindu weddings are of course a subset of the previous category, but were separated because of their relatively large number. This is because of the structure of a traditional wedding, which involves a number of small ceremonies over a period of years or months; even when compressed in time, there are still numerous ceremonies which involve various combinations of people from both the bride's and groom's families (see Sankar 1972).

*Household:* A few words in this category have common English equivalents and are (no doubt consequently) less commonly used. Most items here have a specific and traditional form and/or use: *gobar* 'mixture of cow-dung and mud used to plaster walls,' *dibbi* 'small wooden box used for holding *sindur*,' *soo(p)* 'long triangular fan,' *khatia* 'bed made of woven cord on a wooden frame.'

*Islam:* About half of these words are for everyday or general references to Muslim practice: *juma (namaz)* 'Friday prayer.' The rest pertain mostly to rituals related to Hosay (see Korom 2003) and *rites de passage* such as weddings and funerals.

*Kinship:* Indian kinship systems generally distinguish not only maternal and paternal lines of descent, but place considerable emphasis on age relationships, thus *aja/aji* 'paternal grandfather/grandmother' and *nana/nani* 'maternal grandfather/grandmother'; *bahin* 'younger sister' and *barka bahin* or *didi* 'elder sister.' Although many families do not use the full range of such kinship terms, several are used so widely that they are familiar to (though not necessarily understood by) non-Indians, and some have become extended or generalized in meaning, e.g., *mamu* 'mother's brother; any uncle.'

*Music, Drama, Song, and Stick-fighting:* A few traditional Indian dance-dramas are regularly performed in Trinidad today, especially the *Ram-Lila*. Both popular and classical music are thriving. This include both consumption

25. See Ali 1975; Khan 1994; Vertovec 1992; and Ashram B. Maharaj, Sookdaya and the Ram Goat, *Divali Supplement, Trinidad and Tobago Express*, October 14, 1990. Although there is no evidence that private use of African languages was prohibited, the heterogeneity of the enslaved Africans' languages encouraged their learning of English/Creole or Patois. Official suppression of African-derived religious observances certainly contributed to language death. As Warner-Lewis (1996) points out for Trinidad, most of the "residual" use of Yoruba, spoken by a number of later immigrant laborers well into the twentieth century, centers on names and ritual. Although it is premature to compare the African and Indian linguistic retentions due to differences in their histories and lack of adequate linguistic data, it is clear that religion played an important, perhaps paramount, role in the retention of heritage language terms for both groups.

of music (and language) from imported Bollywood movies, as well as local playing and production. Locally composed songs in a variety of styles, in Hindi, Bhojpuri, English/Creole, or a mixture, feature in numerous *satsangs* 'concerts' and competitions. The growth in popularity of *pichkaree* songs has been remarkable and very aggressive in mixing English and Bhojpuri.<sup>26</sup> The more public appearance of *chutney*, a fast and often suggestive style of music and dancing, based on traditional Indian women's dances, has drawn both criticism and applause from the wider Indian community.<sup>27</sup> Traditional music is an essential part of many Indian ceremonies, such as weddings, and the *tassa* drums of Muslim Hosay (known more widely as *Muharrum*) are renowned, though fewer in number than in the past. *Ghatka*, Indian stick-fighting, is now rare, but still associated with some festivals.<sup>28</sup>

#### MAINSTREAMING OF INDIAN-DERIVED LEXICON

This section touches on the question of how and to what degree particular words have been mainstreamed within the non-Indian population of Trinidad. The corpus may be roughly divided into the following categories:

1. A few words, as mentioned above, have been integrated or assimilated, sometimes with extended meanings, into more general English, such as *brahmin*, *guru*, *mantra*.
2. Some words are used locally, and have become familiar to and often used by non-Indo-Trinidadians. Probably most common are food items such as *anchar* 'fruit preserve,' *baigan* 'eggplant, aubergine, melongen,' and *roti*.<sup>29</sup> These are most likely to be recognized and used as they commonly occur both orally and in print, especially on menus and in newspaper articles and recipes, and the consumption of Indian snack and "street" foods crosses ethnic boundaries. Some referents are noticeably present

26. Blood, *Trinidad Guardian*, March 28, 2002; Maharaj, *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, March 22, 2002; Ravi Ji, What is Boiling in the Abeer, *Trinidad Guardian*, March 22, 2002 and the Child's World through Pichakaree, *Trinidad Guardian*, February 22, 2003. An example from "Maharaj's Vivaah Sanakaar Wedding": "Me body it so hot like a chulha/Meh heart kankaying like a churria./Me an meh dulaha is seel and lorha./ Me an meh dulaha is roti and tawa"(My body is hot like an oven, My heart is rattling like bracelets, Me and my bridegroom are mortar and pestle, Me and my bridegroom are bread and griddle) (Maharaj 2002:11).

27. Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, Power, Gender and Chutney, *Trinidad and Tobago Review*, February 7, 1991.

28. See Annamunthodo 1971; Balkissoon 1975; Myers 1998; Sankeralli 1998; Maharaj 2002; and Ramlakhan, The Story of the Dhantaal, *Express*, March 27 <www.trinicenter.com>.

29. For an extended discussion of the increasing familiarity of *roti*, see Winer (2004).

in the environment, such as *mandirs* ‘Hindu temples’ and are also commonly spoken and written about. Individual personality and history are important factors, as neighborliness, friendships, workplace relations, and kinship connections are doubtless primary factors that contribute to any person’s familiarity with words.

3. By far the largest category of these words consists of those known primarily or exclusively within the Indo-Trinidadian community. This includes some words for referents found as commonly and visibly as those in the previous category but that have not found their way into more general usage. For example, *jhandi* ‘flags indicating the performance of a *puja*’ are a common sight almost everywhere – in front of ordinary houses, not just *mandirs*. Most non-Indo-Trinidadians would know that these indicate an Indian (Hindu) household, and that these are connected with religion, but very rarely are they familiar with the Bhojपुरi term.<sup>30</sup> This category also includes words such as *yagna* and *satsang*, which would frequently be seen in print (advertisements, notices, newspapers), or heard on radio announcements, but which would not be more familiar than, for example, “some kind of Indian thing.” Very few of the terms outside of verbal abuse are private on purpose, but many would be used only in the domestic sphere.<sup>31</sup>

30. According to some linguists familiar with Guyana (including Jeannette Allsopp, personal communication, August 2004), the knowledge of such terms within the non-Indian population is much greater. Of great interest then would be to determine the extent to which the Indic lexicon in the English/Creoles of Trinidad and Guyana overlap, and the relative degrees of “mainstreaming.”

31. In most cases, the lack of familiarity with parts of this lexicon on the part of non-Indians is understandable as a simple lack of participation in cultural practices, particularly religious ones. (For example, though non-Hindus are often guests at Hindu weddings, they would not normally participate in rituals, prayers, cooking, and similar activities.) However, there is also to some extent a factor of intracommunal exclusivity, in which certain culturally specific knowledge (including vocabulary) is “hidden” or not shared with outsiders. In some cases this is because the cultural component may be illegal, considered to be private, or considered liable to be misunderstood, looked down upon, or interfered with by outside authorities, such as *Kali Mai pujas* (see McNeal 2000 and *Caribbean Beat* 54, March/April 2002), or the belief in *rakshas* (a baby who is really a demon), and *jharaying*, a type of ritual healing. Two examples illustrate both the issue of “privacy” and that of both suspicion and appreciation of an outsider knowing about such areas. A white Trinidadian man now living in the United States reported that an Indo-Trinidadian he met there asked him for help obtaining materials he needed for a *puja* ‘prayer meeting’: bamboo poles for *jhandis* (prayer flags), dried mango wood, and *doob* (Bermuda) grass. A few days afterward, the friend reported that some question had arisen as to the suitability of his presence at the *puja*, but that he had actually been defended as being the only person there who could have arranged to get the proper mate-

4. A small but salient category is that of words suddenly made very well known by a well publicized incident, quote, or song. For example, the word *nimakaram* 'ungrateful, lit. to one who has fed you/given you salt; traitor, back-biter' was well known within the Indo-Trinidadian community: "The expression *nimakaram* is a terrible insult in Amity. It is usually translated as 'one who eats another man's food, then does him evil,' but 'ungrateful one' is a simpler and perhaps more pointed definition" (Klass 1961). Subsequent citations found during the 1970s-80s are all from Indo-Trinidadians, and all have explanations attached, such as "[He] is nothing but an unvarnished, 'neemakharam,' an ingrate of the highest order fighting desperately for his own survival."<sup>32</sup> Following a well-publicized political fracas in 1992, however, this became a common term of reference, as in "She said she had turned it down out of loyalty to Panday and had been branded 'neemakharam' (ungrateful)."<sup>33</sup>

Apart from actual surveys of recognition and/or use, one way to track familiarity is by the extent to which words are glossed in newspaper articles (excluding special sections or supplements for Indian holidays). Taking, for example, the word *mandir*, references from the 1980s all tend to have some kind of support or gloss, such as "mandir (Hindu temple)." By the early 1990s, references were also made without such glosses, as in "The wooden pole popped at its base ... and fell on a *mandir*, bringing down house lines, ripping apart a section of a covered area and steps of a nearby house."<sup>34</sup>

rials. In another instance, he reported: "I was at the roti shop and quite a few Trinidadian Indians with whom I had a passing acquaintance were sitting eating and drinking in the booths. I noticed that they perked up when I asked for 'marcha' [Hindi for hot pepper] with my sada roti [plain bread], and in having a casual conversation with one group, I overheard a young lady complain about feeling somewhat unwell. I took the chance and commented that maybe she had sprained her 'nara' [abdomen, groin], and needed it 'rubbed' [massaged]. Someone in the group, seeing the humour, commented back, 'Nah, she need to get ah good jharay [ritual healing].' I replied, 'Den ah go hah to get a Chamar Pundit [low-caste priest] to jharay she.' There was a moment of shocked silence and some serious, hard stares (the word 'chamar' is *not* used or taken lightly by people of Hindu descent, and its combination with 'pundit' seemed shocking to the crowd), so I followed up with 'Doh watch me so hard, nah, an' doh think dat ah making joke, I *know* Nanan Dhany from Barrackpore, he is a *true* Chamar Pundit, is I was de one dat did get tota [parrot] feather, cobra skin an' peacock tail feather so he could a do de jharay correc'!' Gales of laughter followed as the people realized that I, a white Trinidadian, actually had knowledge of this and could tell it in the Trinidadian Indian patois!" (Julius Boos, personal communication, August 2004).

32. *Bomb*, August 22, 1986, p. 3.

33. *Express*, November 27, 1994, p. 5.

34. *Bomb*, January 1, 1993, p. 23.

By 1995, when the first Indo-Trinidadian prime minister was elected, mainstream newspaper articles were likely to include considerable Indian-derived lexicon, especially in reference to Hindu rituals, with no explanations:

Her mission ... was to collect pure water for charhaawayng at various mandirs ... She left Chaguanas at 7 am that morning on teerath aiming to have darshan at nine selected mandirs across the nation ... They offered pooja, havan, aartee, flowers, prasad and seedhaas at all mandirs ... "We arrived at Vishnu Mandir where all the moortis were dressed in clothes. The devotees gave us lots of fresh flowers for our teerath" ... Exchange Mandir was the last stop on the teerath. "We arrived there at sandhya time, 6 pm. It is a very beautiful, quaint dirt mandir."<sup>35</sup>

## DISCUSSION

Preliminary analysis indicates that a majority of the words in this corpus can be considered as "retentions" to name items, practices, beliefs, and beliefs that are found in the original language/culture, but not in the host language community. The overwhelming majority of words in the corpus pertain to the terminologies of religion, cuisine, and household; this pattern of domain dispersion is typical of residual bilingualism (Fishman 1989:235).

Some words are commonly used; some are not, though when they are used they are meaningful and precise. Some are uncommonly used but very important in a particular context. Furthermore, many of these words are known very unevenly throughout the Indo-Trinidadian population, by gender, age, and work experience. It should also be remembered that many Indo-Trinidadians would recognize and understand words in context that they would not be able to produce or define otherwise.

The final section examined ways in which some words have been mainstreamed within the non-Indian population of Trinidad, including those frequently mentioned and generally understood, and those made suddenly well known by a salient usage. An increasing use of Indian vocabulary in newspaper articles probably reflects the increasing awareness of the cultural and political importance of the Indo-Trinidadian community on a national level.

Future lines of research might well explore the Indian source language(s) of some lexical items in the corpus. Comparison of the entire corpus and domain dispersal could be made with similar contexts, such as Indian communities in Guyana and Fiji. An area of comparison that could be explored within TEC is that of the domains of the various contributing languages (Amerindian, European, African, and Asian), as well as closer work on patterns of usage and familiarity (such as surveys of frequency, social factors, contexts) both within and outside the Indo-Trinidadian community, and an examination of policies and strategies of partial language maintenance.

35. *Trinidad Guardian*, November 1995, p. 11.

## REFERENCES

- ALI, NAZIDA, 1975. Indian Funerals and Allied Rituals in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- ALLADIN, M.P., 1970. *A Village in Trinidad*. Maraval, Trinidad: n.p.
- ANNAMUNTHODO, W. (ed.), 1971. *Trinidad and Tobago Phagwa (Holi) Festival: Phagwa (Holi) Celebrations and Chowtal Singing Competitions in Trinidad*. San Fernando, Trinidad: Unique Services.
- BALKISSOON, KAMLA, [1975]. Some Indian Social and Religious Customs in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- BHATIA, TEJ K., 1982. Trinidad Hindi: Three Generations of a Transplanted Variety. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 11:135-50.
- BIRBALSINGH, FRANK (ed.), 1988. *Jahaji Bhai: An Anthology of Indo-Caribbean Literature*. Toronto: TSAR Press.
- BOODOOSINGH, JENNY-LYNEE, 1976. Aspects of East Indian Vocabulary in the Language of Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- BRERETON, BRIDGET, 1979. *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad 1870-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- CLARKE, COLIN G., 1986. *East Indians in a West Indian Town: San Fernando, Trinidad, 1930-70*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- CROSS, MALCOLM, 1972. *East Indians of Guyana and Trinidad*. London: Minority Rights Group.
- DABYDEEN, DAVID & BRINSLEY SAMAROO (eds.), 1987. *India in the Caribbean*. London: Hansib.
- DE VERTEUIL, ANTHONY, 1989. *Eight East Indian Immigrants: Gokool, Soodeen, Sookoo, Capildeo, Beccani, Ruknaddeen, Valiama, Bunsee*. Port of Spain: Paria.
- DIPTEE, JUDY, 1992. Women of the Cane. In Kumar Mahabir (ed.), *East Indian Women of Trinidad and Tobago: An Annotated Bibliography with Photographs and Ephemera*. San Juan, Trinidad: Chakra, pp. 243-47.
- DUKHEDIN-LALLA, PATRICIA, 1974. A Creole Trichotomy: The Case of Hindi in Trinidad Creole with Reference to Standardization. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- FISHMAN, JOSHUA, 1989. *Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective*. Clevedon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.
- GAMBHIR, SURENDRA K., 1983. Diglossia in Dying Languages: A Case Study of Guyanese Bhojpuri and Standard Hindi. *Anthropological Linguistics* 25:28-38.

GARCIA, M.E., 2003. Recent Research on Language Maintenance. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 23:22-43.

INDAR, POLLY B. & DOROTHY B. RAMESAR (eds.), 1988. *Naparima Girls' High School, Diamond Jubilee 1912-1987, Recipe Book*. San Fernando, Trinidad: Naparima Girls' High School.

JHA, JAGDISH CHANDRA, 1973. Indian Heritage in Trinidad, West Indies. *Caribbean Quarterly* 19(2):28-50.

—, 1976a. The Hindu Sacraments (Rites de passage) in Trinidad and Tobago. *Caribbean Quarterly* 22:40-52.

—, 1976b. The Hindu Festival of Divali in the Caribbean. *Caribbean Quarterly* 22:53-61.

KANHAI, ROSANNE (ed.), 1999. *Matikor: The Politics of Identity for Indo-Caribbean Women*. St. Augustine, Trinidad: School of Continuing Studies, University of the West Indies.

KHAN, ALISHA, 1994. *Juthaa* in Trinidad: Food, Pollution, and Hierarchy in a Caribbean Diaspora Community. *American Ethnologist* 21:245-69.

KHAN, ISMITH, 1961. *The Jumbie Bird*. Toronto: George J. McCleod. [Orig. 1961.]

—, 1988. Uncle Rajo's Shoes. In Frank Birbalsingh (ed.), *Jahaji Bhai: An Anthology of Indo-Caribbean Literature*. Toronto: TSAR Press, pp. 57-71.

KLASS, MORTON, 1961. *East Indians in Trinidad: A Study of Cultural Persistence*. New York: Columbia University Press.

—, 1991. *Singing with Sai Baba: The Politics of Revitalization in Trinidad*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

KOROM, FRANK J., 2003. *Hosay Trinidad: Muharram Performances in an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

LACKHAN, RABINDRANATH, [1983-86]. *Plants of Religious Significance to the Hindu Population of Trinidad and Tobago*. California, Trinidad: California Hindu Temple.

LADOO, HAROLD SONNY, 1972. *No Pain Like This Body*. Toronto: Anansi Press.

—, 1974. *Yesterdays*. Toronto: Anansi Press.

LA GUERRE, JOHN (ed.), 1985. *Calcutta to Caroni: The East Indians of Trinidad*. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies, Extra Mural Studies Unit. [Orig. 1974.]

LEWIS [KIRTON], ENID, 1972. *Voices of Earth*. Gasparillo, Trinidad: Rilloprint.

LEWIS, IVOR, 1991. *Sahibs, Nabobs and Boxwallahs: A Dictionary of the Words of Anglo-India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MAHABIR, NOOR KUMAR, 1985. *The Still Cry: Personal Accounts of East Indians in Trinidad and Tobago During Indentureship (1845-1917)*. Tacarigua, Trinidad: Calaloux Publications.

—, 1991. *Medicinal and Edible Plants Used by East Indians of Trinidad and Tobago*. El Dorado, Trinidad: Chakra.

—, 1992a. *East Indian Women of Trinidad and Tobago: An Annotated Bibliography with Photographs and Ephemera*. San Juan, Trinidad: Chakra.

—, 1992b. *Caribbean East Indian Recipes*. San Juan, Trinidad: Chakra.

—, 2000. Female Folk Healers in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, Conference on Asian Migrations to the Americas, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.

— & SITA MAHABIR, 1990. *A Dictionary of Common Trinidad Hindi*. 2nd ed. El Dorado, Trinidad: Chakra.

—, 1994. *Kahana Village: A Collection of Stories*. Couva, Trinidad: Indian Review Press.

—, 1994. Which One to Play. *Indian Arrival Day 1994: Towards 150 Years*. Freeport, Trinidad: Indian Arrival Day Association of Trinidad and Tobago, pp. 26-27.

MAHARAJ, ASHRAM B., 1994. *Kahana Village: A Collection of Stories*. Couva, Trinidad: Indian Review Press.

MCGREGOR, R.S., 1993. *The Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MCNEAL, KEITH E., 2000. The Many Faces of Mother Kali: Caribbean Hinduism and the Moral Politics of Diaspora Ritual Performance in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, Conference on Asian Migrations to the Americas, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.

MEOSA, ELIANE, 1971. The Family, East Indian Courtship and Marriage Customs in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.

MOHAMMED, SHAMOON, 1982. *Mastana Bahar and Indian Culture in Trinidad and Tobago*. San Juan, Trinidad: Mastana Bahar Thesis Publication Committee.

MOHAN, PEGGY, 1990. The Rise and Fall of Trinidad Bhojpuri. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 85:21-30.

— & PAUL ZADOR, 1986. Discontinuity in a Life Cycle: The Death of Trinidad Bhojpuri. *Language* 62:291-319.

MORTON, SARAH E., 1916. *John Morton of Trinidad*. Toronto: Westminster.

MYERS, HELEN, 1998 *Music of Hindu Trinidad: Songs from the India Diaspora*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

NAIPAUL, V.S., 1964. *The Mystic Masseur*. Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin. [Orig. 1957.]



- , 1969a. *The Suffrage of Elvira*. Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin. [Orig. 1958.]
- , 1969b. *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin. [Orig. 1961.]
- NIEHOFF, ARTHUR & JUANITA NIEHOFF, 1960. *East Indians in the West Indies*. Milwaukee WI: Milwaukee Public Museum.
- PARIAG, PETER, 1975. The Eating Habits of the Lower Class East Indian in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.
- PASTNER, CARROLL MCCLURE, 1967. *A Sociolinguistic Study of a Rural Trinidad Community*. New York: Research Institute for the Study of Man.
- PERSAUD, LAKSHMI, 1990. *Butterfly in the Wind*. Leeds, U.K.: Peepal Tree Press.
- , 1993. *Sastra*. Leeds, U.K.: Peepal Tree Press.
- RAGHOO, LAL, 1984. Retention and Adaptation of Dress, Ornament and Food of Indian Culture in Trinidad. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.
- RAMESAR, MARIANNE SOARES, 1999/2000. The Significance of Changing Dress Styles among Indo-Trinidadians (1845-1945). *Journal of Caribbean Studies* 14:117-30.
- RAMLAKHAN, RAJNIE, 1990. East Indian Street Theatre in Trinidad and Tobago. *Offerings* 6:18-40.
- RAMNATH, HARRY, 1982. *India Came West*. Marabella, Trinidad: Ramnath.
- SANKERALLI, BURTON, 1998. Indian Presence in Carnival. *TDR* 42(3):203-12.
- SAWH, RUTH, 1982. *Rotiless Ramgoolie*. Trinidad: Trinprint.
- SEESARAN, E.B. ROSABELLE, 2002. *From Caste to Class: The Social Mobility of the Indo-Trinidadian Community 1870-1917*. Trinidad: Rosaac.
- SELVON, SAMUEL, 1979. *Turn Again, Tiger*. London: Heinemann Educational Books [Orig. 1958.]
- , 1971. *A Brighter Sun*. London: Longman Caribbean [Orig. 1952.]
- , 1972. *Those Who Eat the Cascadura*. London: Davis-Poynter.
- , 1973. *Ways of Sunlight*. London: Longman Caribbean [Orig. 1957.]
- , 1985. *The Plains of Caroni*. Toronto: Williams-Wallace.
- SINGH, ISHTLA, 1988. A Linguistic Overview of the Speech of the Indo-Trinidadian. Unpubl. paper, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad.
- VERTOVEC, STEVEN, 1992. *Hindu Trinidad: Religion, Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Change*. London: Macmillan Education.
- WARNER-LEWIS, MAUREEN, 1991. *Guinea's Other Suns: The African Dynamic in Trinidad Culture*. Dover MA: Majority Press.

—, 1996. *Trinidad Yoruba: From Mother Tongue to Memory*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

WINER, LISE, 1992a. Ethnic Lexis in an English Creole Dictionary. *Dictionaries* 13:65-74.

—, 1992b. Health and Medical Terminology in Trinidad and Tobago. *General Practitioners Association Trinidad and Tobago Medical Journal* 16:32-39.

—, 1993. *Varieties of English around the World, Vol. 6: Trinidad and Tobago*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

— & EDITH LILY AGUILAR, 1991. Spanish Influence in the Lexicon of Trinidadian English Creole. *New West Indian Guide* 65:153-91.

— & HANS E.A. BOOS, 1991. Agouti to Zandoli: Fauna Lexicon in the *Dictionary of Trinbagonian*. *Living World*, Special issue, pp. 25-28.

WOOD, DONALD, 1968. *Trinidad in Transition: The Years after Slavery*. London: Institute of Race Relations & Oxford University Press.

YULE, HENRY & A.C. BURNELL, 1985. *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. [Orig. 1886.]

LISE WINER  
Faculty of Education  
McGill University  
3700 McTavish  
Montreal, Quebec  
Canada H3A 1Y2  
<lise.winer@mcgill.ca>

LAURENCE BROWN

EXPERIMENTS IN INDENTURE: BARBADOS AND  
THE SEGMENTATION OF MIGRANT LABOR IN  
THE CARIBBEAN 1863-1865

In the summer of 1863, over two thousand Barbadians traveled to the sugar plantations of St. Croix and Antigua under three-year contracts of indenture.<sup>1</sup> Larger movements of migrant labor from Barbados flowed across the Caribbean during the nineteenth century. However, the migrants of 1863 were unique because their contracts mirrored those used to import Asian and African immigrants. This brief convergence between currents of regional migration and indentured immigration from outside the Caribbean is particularly significant as these two groups became increasingly segregated within the British West Indian sugar industry during the late 1860s (Rodney 1981:31-59). Caribbean historiography has rarely examined the changing relationship between these two flows of migrant labor, yet the emergence and rapid termination of projects for indentured Barbadian labor reveals much about the debates, conditions, and tensions within the island colonies that shaped the construction of indentured immigration during the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

The re-emergence of indentureship in the postemancipation Caribbean was marked by considerable experimentation with both the terms and sources of migration between the 1830s and 1860s. In the first decade after the abolition of slavery, there was a proliferation of private and state-sponsored projects for immigrant labor which drew migrants from Europe, North America, Asia, and Africa (Laurence 1971). During this period, indentured immigrants were outnumbered by migrant workers from the Eastern

1. This paper has been considerably improved by the comments of Richard Allen and Barry Higman, as well as by discussions at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians in Nassau. I am also very grateful to Daryl Josiah and his family for their hospitality and help in Antigua, and to Kimberlee Armstrong and Pernille Røge for their assistance in Barbados and Denmark.

2. Roberts 1955; Johnson 1973; Rodney 1977; Marshall 1984.

Caribbean who were recruited, without long-term contracts, by the planters of Trinidad and British Guiana (Richardson 1980). However, the balance between these two currents of labor migration was reversed after the economic crisis of 1846 caused by the British repeal of protective tariffs on West Indian sugar. As planters cut the wage-rates that had drawn regional migrants, colonial governments in the southern Caribbean became increasingly committed to long-term contract migration, and particularly to the indentureship of Africans seized by the British repression of the Atlantic slave trade. During the 1850s, India replaced Africa as the dominant source of indentured immigrants and the terms of service were lengthened and standardized, culminating with the peak of indentured immigration into the British West Indies in the early 1860s (Laurence 1965; Look Lai 1993:52-61; Northrup 1995:21, 159-60).

Underpinning the multitude of projects for migrant labor during the mid-nineteenth century was the belief that population density was the central motor for plantation production. This nexus between population, land, and labor supply had been repeatedly articulated during the demographic debates of the early 1800s as population decrease became a symbol for abolitionists of the bankruptcy of West Indian slavery and as the expansion of the British empire in the Pacific and Asia fueled new theories about the nature of colonial settlement (Curtin 1955:134-35; Higman 1982). After emancipation in 1834, colonial officials and planter elites across the British West Indies sought to physically concentrate island populations within the plantation economy through legislation against internal or external migration, and through state-supported schemes for migrant labor. Population density on the islands was therefore far from simply a "geophysical fact," but emerged from the changing conflicts between planter interests, colonial authorities, and workers (Bolland 1981:614).

The fusion of colonial debates over population and migration was starkly articulated in 1863 when Barbados was wracked by labor unrest and food shortages. Mass emigration from the island was seen as both a temporary safety valve to alleviate social discontent and as a destabilizing threat to plantation production. The speedy measures by Barbadian authorities to close off labor migration after the summer crisis, reveals the extent to which perceptions of overpopulation emerged from competing economic and political interests rather than demographic realities. Following the separate streams of Barbadian migrants across the Caribbean during this period highlights how colonial governments transposed indenture contracts from one immigration project to another. Yet, if indentureship threatened to become a common framework for migrant labor during the early 1860s, such experiments were rapidly blocked by intercolonial rivalries over labor supply. These tensions between the sugar economies of the British West Indies were reinforced by differences in environment, technology, and capital which ultimately

produced increasing economic specialization and ethnic differentiation of migrant labor in the region.

MALTHUS OR MIGRATION:  
THE POLITICS OF POPULATION IN BARBADOS

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies was commemorated in London with a public meeting on August 1, 1859 addressed by the Governor of Barbados, Francis Hincks. In celebrating emancipation as an economic success in the Caribbean, Hincks (1859:1-2, 11) explicitly sought to support contemporary abolitionist campaigning in North America. He believed that the fall in West Indian sugar production which had followed emancipation was to be blamed on poor policy by colonial elites, rather than the moral character of the former slaves. His speech in London drew on the position Hincks had expressed a few months earlier in Barbados to the visiting *New York Times* journalist, William Sewell,

Governor Hincks is of the opinion that there *is* a sufficiency of labor in many of the colonies, and that the resort to indiscriminate Coolie immigration is unnecessary and uncalled for. He thinks that this, next to slavery, is the most expensive kind of labor; one which it is impolitic to encourage when Creole labor can be procured by the inducements of higher wages and a more liberal tenure. (Sewell 1862:56-57)

Describing to his London audience how plantation production in Barbados had become more efficient with emancipation, Hincks (1859:10-11, 28) rejected criticisms that this was solely due to the uniquely high population density of the island and argued that similar economic growth was possible for the rest of the region.

Throughout his London speech, Hincks drew on the survey of postemancipation labor conditions written by Sewell during the journalist's travels across the British West Indies in 1859. On his visit to Barbados, Sewell (1862:13, 17, 27-28) praised the island as proving the profitability of free labor over slave production. During the 1820s, Barbados averaged sugar exports of 11,946 tons per year, while by the 1850s these had almost tripled to 31,261 tons per year as planters developed more intensive methods of cultivation.<sup>3</sup> Sewell (1862:31) argued that this dramatic increase in the island's sugar exports was primarily due to the island's high population density which guaranteed an abundant supply of labor, and he wrote that "to this cause more,

3. From the mid-1840s Barbadian planters invested heavily in guano to fertilize their sugar crops. However, such agricultural improvements depended on cheap labor for constant replanting (Sewell 1862:15, 26, 62-63; Deerr 1949:193-94; Sheridan 1989:72-77).

perhaps, than to any other, she owes her present wonderful prosperity.” With over 150,000 inhabitants, and an estimated 95 percent of her 166 square mile surface area devoted to agriculture, Barbados appeared almost “a perfect garden,” the model colonial export economy (Sewell 1862:33-34). Yet Sewell (1862:58) also recognized that such economic gains came at a social cost, as he described the island’s “overstocked and imprisoned population, compelled to work on such terms as the planters may dictate.”

The intensification of sugar production in postemancipation Barbados that so impressed Sewell in 1859 rested on exceedingly fragile foundations. Arguing that agricultural labor in Barbados had always been abundant, Sewell (1862:33) wrote that “partly from an aversion of the negro to leave his home, partly from his fear, still easily excited, of being sold into slavery, no material emigration from the island has ever taken place.” In fact, during the decade that immediately followed emancipation, there had been a considerable exodus from the island to Trinidad and British Guiana, despite the enactment by the Barbados Assembly of legislation restricting emigration in 1839 and 1840. While these laws were framed in the language of protecting workers from exploitative immigration agents and of saving dependents from abandonment, their unstated intention was to deliberately perpetuate the island’s high population density to support its plantation economy (Roberts 1955:247-49; Richardson 1980:398-400). Postemancipation productivity on the plantations of Barbados had been based on reducing labor costs (through linking wages and rent for residence) and expanding the cultivation of sugarcane on estate land at the expense of provision grounds (Levy 1980:126-27). This potentially volatile combination of limited labor mobility, low wages, and the reliance on imported foodstuffs exploded in the summer of 1863 when a prolonged and extreme drought dramatically pushed plantation laborers to the brink of subsistence.

In the words of the governor of Barbados, James Walker, 1863 was a “year of hardship and distress to all classes.”<sup>4</sup> However, the crisis fell most heavily on the laboring poor, due to the “long and severe drought which not only brought about a scarcity of native provisions but rendered agricultural employment from the state of the soil both difficult and valueless.”<sup>5</sup> By July 1863, faced with a reduced crop, estates had cut back their labor forces to only employing workers for a few days a week or long enough to cover the rents on estate tenancies.<sup>6</sup> As one local journalist noted, “in many parts of the country the people are starving: and where a labouring man is compelled to receive nine cents a day and pay his rent out of it, and support his family,

4. Minutes of the House of Assembly (henceforth MHA), October 6, 1863, Black Rock, Barbados National Archives, p. 62.

5. Walker to Newcastle, October 21, 1863, CO 28/197, National Archives, London.

6. *The Times (Bridgetown)*, July 10, 1863, p. 3.

it can easily be judged what their condition is.”<sup>7</sup> Faced with such demands, the existing system of parish-based poor relief broke down as the vestries of St. Philip and St. Lucy were forced to seek emergency funds from the House of Assembly.<sup>8</sup> The American Civil War had already created a shortage of imported foodstuffs, while the only local provisions that survived the drought were potatoes, whose scarcity across the island meant that the small amount of produce available was largely reserved for the estates.<sup>9</sup> As wages and provision supplies shrank dramatically over the summer, so food prices, unemployment, and social unrest soared.

These extreme conditions of privation and semi-starvation fueled a massive upsurge in petty crime, especially in raids on the provision grounds of the estates. There were also open confrontations between the militia, police, and crowds at the beginning of July 1863 when a shipwreck on the coastline of St. Phillip seemed to offer a providential source of food, and at the end of the same month police opened fire on a crowd gathered during a cane fire at the Mount Hillaby Estate.<sup>10</sup> But it was the night raids on plantation provision grounds and storehouses by groups of laborers that generated the greatest “feeling of alarm and insecurity” amongst the authorities.<sup>11</sup> As Governor Walker recognized, labor protest against cuts in wages, employment and the redefinition of task work became mixed with crimes of starvation.<sup>12</sup> In response, groups of special constables were drafted to protect certain estates and organized into night patrols of the central parishes on the island. Repression dramatically doubled the island’s prison population to 650 by the end of summer, the vast majority of whom had been sentenced for raids on plantations’ provision grounds.<sup>13</sup> On July 28, 1863 the Governor’s Council and House of Assembly unanimously voted a special bill which specified the punishment of flogging for adult males if they were part of a group of three or more that sought to “enter upon any cultivated land for the purpose of committing any deprivation or outrage.”<sup>14</sup>

7. *The Times*, July 24, 1863, p. 3; Sewell had earlier estimated that an average agricultural wage in Barbados was 22 to 25c a day (Sewell 1862:146).

8. MHA, June 23, 1863, pp. 43-44; MHA, July 28, 1863, pp. 53, 56.

9. *The Times*, July 10, 1863, p. 3.

10. *The Times*, July 7, 1863, p. 3; *The Times*, July 10, 1863, p. 2. (Carter 1996; Beckles 2004:95-180).

11. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

12. Walker to Newcastle, July 25, 1863, CO 28/196; Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

13. MHA, October 6, 1863, p. 62; Walker to Cardwell, October 31, 1864, CO 28/199; Mundy to Cardwell, October 18, 1865, CO 28/201.

14. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

Amidst this summer of crisis, migration was seen by the authorities, the local press, and laborers of Barbados as an important means of relief. An editorial in *The Times (Bridgetown)* argued,

That the majority of our labouring population are enduring great privation at the present time is a fact – that few, we believe, will be found bold enough to deny; and having no prospect of improvement, but the contrary; in view of the rapidity with which they multiply, some means might be devised by which their condition might be improved, and the destitution which prevails among them diminished... We have more than once advocated the emigration of a few thousands of the population – the advantage thereby accruing to society and the people themselves would be incalculable, whilst the planting interest would not suffer in consequence. There are many people who cannot find employment, these may emigrate.<sup>15</sup>

On the same page as the above statement, the journal noted the spontaneous migration by those who could afford passages to St. Vincent, Trinidad, and British Guiana.<sup>16</sup> Others without such resources sought an escape from the drought through enlistment in the West Indian Regiment, which resulted in the local garrison being swamped by applicants.<sup>17</sup> However, such movements were transformed by the end of that summer with the establishment of organized recruitment schemes that provided new opportunities for emigration to those without the means to cover the costs of sea passage.

#### BARBADIAN INDENTURED IMMIGRATION TO ST. CROIX AND ANTIGUA

In the years immediately preceding the drought of 1863, Barbadian authorities had actively sought to prevent the foreign recruitment of agricultural laborers. In early September 1860, an immigration agent for St. Croix began advertising in rural districts across Barbados promising free passage and a signing-on bonus (bounty) of up to five dollars a head which quickly drew two hundred workers who sought to emigrate.<sup>18</sup> There was enthusiasm despite rumors that migrants would be sold back into slavery, and in the face of considerable official pressure which went as far as having police board immigrant ships, as well as a direct request from the Barbados government to the authorities in St. Croix to suspend recruiting. Governor Hincks of Barbados opposed such emigration, citing concerns for the migrant's interests, as the exploitative actions by recruiting agents would render them "apprentices for

15. *The Times* July 17, 1863, p. 2.

16. *The Times* July 17, 1863, p. 2.

17. *The Times*, July 10, 1863, p. 3; *The Times*, July 24, 1863, p. 3.

18. Hincks to Newcastle, September 8, 1860, CO 28/191.



life.”<sup>19</sup> However, at the same time as Hincks so actively opposed the large-scale migration of black laborers, he sought to encourage emigration from Barbados by poor whites due to fears about their economic and physical decline after emancipation (Watson 2000). For the governor and the colonial government, migration was a means of relief for those sections of Barbadian society that fell outside the plantation economy, but it was not to be extended so as to directly challenge the labor relations within the sugar industry.

The resistance of the ruling elite of Barbados to the organized emigration of agricultural workers contrasted with the explicit commitment of imperial authorities to labor mobility (Roberts 1955:248-49; Marshall 1984:6-10). At the start of 1861, the Colonial Office in Britain accepted the organization of regional immigration to St. Croix, in the face of considerable opposition by Barbadian authorities.<sup>20</sup> By the time this decision reached Barbados, the recruiting agent for St. Croix, Barbadian Charles Bryan, was no longer on the island, having been threatened with prosecution under the immigration laws of 1840.<sup>21</sup> In late 1862, Bryan returned to the island and attempted to renew the recruitment of migrants, however, the new governor of Barbados, James Walker, reversed London’s policy by arguing that this migration scheme was based on a system of bounties which had been absolutely rejected by Britain in 1846.<sup>22</sup>

Paralleling its failed attempts to recruit agricultural laborers from Barbados, the St. Croix government was also lobbying in Washington to obtain black migrant labor from America and in London for access to indentured immigration from British India.<sup>23</sup> Slavery had been abolished in the Danish West Indies in 1848, however this had been followed by a twelve-year period of apprenticeship that had maintained workforces on the sugar estates until the early 1860s. Fearing severe labor shortages once the island’s population was no longer legally tied to the plantations, St. Croix authorities received approval for indentured Indian immigration in early 1863 after extensive negotiations in Britain. Under indentures for five years, 321

19. Hincks to Newcastle, September 6, 1860, CO 28/191.

20. Hincks to Newcastle, January 10, 1861, CO 28/192; Newcastle to Hincks, February 13, 1861, CO 28/192.

21. Barbadian authorities admitted that the Act of 1840 only provided a penalty for “falsehoods” by immigration agents, and therefore there was no legal penalty for them to enforce against Bryan’s actions which they had declared illegal (Hincks to Newcastle, September 8, 1860, CO 28/191).

22. Walker to Newcastle, October 24, 1862, CO 28/195.

23. “Employment of Laborers of African Extraction in the Island of St. Croix: Correspondence between the State Department of the United States and the Chargé d’affaires of Denmark,” Washington, 1862, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York.

migrants left India in late February 1863, just before the close of the official recruiting season (Sircar 1971:136-42).<sup>24</sup> These pre-existing projects for migrant labor resulted in a rapid response by St. Croix's government to news of the summer crisis in Barbados.

The drought and disorder of 1863 forced Barbadian authorities to reverse their earlier opposition to emigration to St. Croix, thought significantly the renewal of labor recruiting came not from St. Croix's official agent, but from Barbadian J.H. Shannon who began advertising for agricultural laborers on his own initiative in mid-July 1863. Shannon informed potential migrants that he had chartered a schooner, the *Gold Hunter*, "to take them free of all expense for passage to said Island [St Croix], there to make their own terms."<sup>25</sup> A fortnight later, Charles Bryan returned to Barbados and set up his own recruitment office in Bridgetown on the same block of Prince William Henry Street as Shannon. Rather than simply providing free passage, Bryan restarted his earlier efforts in which migrants were paid bounties for agreeing to three-year contracts.<sup>26</sup> With an official system of contract immigration established by St. Croix, Shannon moved his efforts at the end of August 1863 to recruiting workers for Antigua on behalf of that colony's government.

Like St. Croix, Antigua's swiftly constructed scheme for Barbadian emigration emerged from a series of earlier projects and negotiations over immigrant labor. In 1834, Antigua was unique in the British West Indies for enacting immediate emancipation due to the confidence of its plantocracy in controlling the island's working population (Hall 1971:17-31). By the time of the 1846 crisis over sugar duties, such beliefs had been replaced by complaints of labor shortage, which led Antiguan planters to join the demands of other West Indian colonies for indentured immigration (Hall 1971:45; Dyde 2000:162). A decade later, the rising sugar prices of the late 1850s fueled intensifying calls for migrant labor (Deerr 1950:531).

Visiting Antigua in early 1860, William Sewell (1862:145, 154) had ambivalently reported that despite the island's population of over thirty-five thousand people, local authorities claimed that there was a labor shortage with only six thousand field laborers. He wrote that,

Small as Antigua is, there are parts of the island where labor is abundant and other parts where labor is scarce. The planters are seeking to introduce coolies. They are in need, they say, of 2000 laborers; and it is to be presumed that they understand their own wants (Sewell 1862:152).

24. In British India, the state-sanctioned recruitment season for migrant labor to the Caribbean was between September and February (Tinker 1993:137).

25. *The Times*, July 17, 1863, p. 2.

26. Birch to Walker, August 15, 1864, CO 28/198.

While Sewell (1862:148, 156) had enthusiastically endorsed the results of indentured Indian immigration in Trinidad, he noted that in Antigua there had been little attempt to recruit workers from the local population, particularly the fifteen thousand-strong residents of the island's free villages. At the same time that Sewell was writing, acting Antiguan governor, Edward Eyre, was enthusiastically endorsing overseas labor as necessary for continued sugar production and in the best interests of the colony.<sup>27</sup>

Eyre had been a temporary replacement for Governor Ker Baillie Hamilton, who upon his return to Antigua found himself in opposition to the House of Assembly's strengthening commitment to immigration. Hamilton made his endorsement of indentured immigration from Africa and Asia conditional on reforms for the island's Creole population, particularly on the local Assembly funding improved medical and municipal services.<sup>28</sup> While these reforms were reluctantly enacted by the assembly, Hamilton publicly declared in September 18962 that

Notwithstanding the urgent sentiments expressed in the House of Assembly for the reception of Immigrants, I am of the opinion that Immigration to this Island cannot be carried out to any large extent. The Island is subject to drought – that of 1860 was remarkable for its long continuance – and at such times the present population is superabundant and the lower orders are subject to great privation. The improved economic management of Plantations and the skillful application of labor with the employment of modern implements of husbandry are likely to do more for the Colony, already supplied with a sufficient population and where labor is cheap, than the costly experience of introducing foreign laborers who are not likely to do more work or demand less wages than the native Peasantry.<sup>29</sup>

Hamilton's opposition to indentured immigration, which was decisive in the Colonial Office rejecting the colony's demand for liberated African migrants, earned him the opprobrium of the local planters who argued in reply "there may be a redundancy of population and yet a deficiency of labour."<sup>30</sup>

In early 1862, the Antiguan legislature had passed an export tax to fund indentured immigration, which within eighteen months had raised eight-

27. "To His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, KG, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Memorial of the House of Assembly of Antigua" (hereafter "To the Duke of Newcastle"), May 1863, Codrington Papers, E 31, Antigua National Archives (hereafter ANA), p. 1.

28. "To the Duke of Newcastle," p. 3.

29. "To the Duke of Newcastle," p. 9; Hamilton also criticised the accommodation available on the estates as insufficient for native laborers and any potential indentured immigrants ("To the Duke of Newcastle," p. 10).

30. "To the Duke of Newcastle," pp. 13-14.

and-a-half thousand pounds.<sup>31</sup> Directly petitioning the Colonial Office for the importation of Indian immigrants, Antiguan planters were forced to postpone their recruitment of indentured immigrants at the end of 1862, owing to the insistence of authorities in Britain on legislative and financial provisions in case drought in Antigua threatened migrant employment.<sup>32</sup> These delays in securing indentured immigration from Asia and Africa meant that Antiguan planters swiftly reacted to the crisis in Barbados during the summer of 1863, and that they approached that migration in the same way as immigrants from outside the region.

In late July 1863, a three-member delegation from the legislature of Antigua visited Barbados seeking to recruit one to two thousand plantation laborers.<sup>33</sup> Heading the delegation was Executive Council member Charles Eldridge, who reported that

the opinion is pretty generally expressed that the people [of Barbados] will not go down to enter into contracts; and many persons apparently favourable to us suggest that we should place a small vessel on the berth for Antigua, making a nominal charge for passage money and leaving them free to make their own engagements in Antigua ... This plan, we cannot adopt.<sup>34</sup>

As a result, Antigua's immigration agent, J.H. Shannon, did not simply arrange passage for the migrants to negotiate their own employment as he had initially done for St. Croix, but rather advertised for workers and their families willing to contract themselves for three years in Antigua.

To make such terms more attractive, migrants were offered a signing-on bounty of twenty-five dollars, a house, provision grounds, medical care, and regular wages of twenty cents per day.<sup>35</sup> Merchants Ramsey, Elder and Co. guaranteed to potential emigrants a free transfer of remittances between their stores in Antigua and Barbados. While the terms of the contract broadly mirrored those of indentured immigrants from Asia and Africa, the offer of individual houses and land plots in Antigua and St. Croix contrasted to

31. A third of the funds for immigration were to come from an export tax levied on sugar and rum, another third from contributions from the colonial government, and a third direct from the employers of the immigrants ("To the Duke of Newcastle," pp. 2-3, 20).

32. Rodgers to Garraway, December 29, 1862, Codrington Papers, E 31, ANA. It was not until the end of June 1863 that Lord Newcastle fully endorsed indentured immigration to Antigua (Newcastle to Hill, June 30, 1863, Leeward Island Dispatches, 1863, ANA).

33. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, copy July 21, 1863, Eldridge to Walker, CO 28/196; Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, copy July 16, 1863, Hill to Walker, CO 28/196.

34. *Antigua Times*, August 1, 1863, p. 3.

35. *The Times*, August 28, 1863, p. 2; Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

the barracks accommodation and ration systems which were developed for indentured labor in British Guiana, Trinidad, and Cuba. The substantial signing-on bonus and the omission of any right to repatriation also differentiated the labor contracts offered to Barbadians from those of indentured Indian immigrants. Despite such differences, Antiguan planters described and saw Barbadian migrants as indentured laborers, even passing a law within a month of their arrival in Antigua to prevent the "clandestine departure and removal of indentured immigrants."<sup>36</sup>

Given the social unrest of the summer, Governor Walker of Barbados was far more sympathetic to the Antiguan scheme than he had been to the earlier efforts of St. Croix. Walker informed the visiting Antiguan delegation that,

If any of the laborers are discontented with their position or complain of a scarcity of employment, or imagine that they will better their condition by leaving the Island, they are at perfect liberty to do so, and the Executive will be very far from interposing any difficulty in their way.

On the contrary, if any of them decide to quit Barbados and seek their fortunes elsewhere, I should prefer to see them resort to a well established old British colony like Antigua with a soil and climate more congenial to them than can be the swampy lands of Demerara.<sup>37</sup>

Yet despite such proclamations, the Governor's Council in Barbados deliberately withheld from officially sanctioning the immigration schemes by St. Croix and Antigua, even as both colonies openly recruited Barbadian laborers. Far from migration being actively used by the Barbados government as a "means of immediate relief," its response to foreign recruiting efforts was far more hesitant, complex, and contradictory (Roberts 1955:252; Fletcher 1980).

As the Legislative Assembly of Antigua debated the importation of Barbadian laborers, at least one of its members recognized the ambivalence of authorities in Barbados to such emigration. Upon hearing the report of its delegation to Barbados, Thomas Foote, attorney for the Parham Hill plantation, commented that,

it would seem that the Planters of Barbados were indisposed to promote emigration from that Colony, and that judging from the remarks of Mr Walker, in an ordinary good season, the supposed superabundant population was not more than sufficient for their own agricultural wants. Remembering that there once existed a law in this Island to punish persons enticing people away from the Colony, it appears not the right thing to do to others what we did not like to be done to ourselves.<sup>38</sup>

36. *The Times*, September 12, 1863, p. 3.

37. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, copy July 22, 1863, Walker to Eldridge, CO 28/196.

38. *Antigua Times*, August 1, 1863, p. 3.

In reply, Foote's colleagues in the Assembly mocked his scruples, especially given his recent willingness to employ Chinese immigrants who had been shipwrecked on neighboring Barbuda in May 1863 (Dyde 2000:165). While the Antiguan House of Assembly strongly endorsed Barbadian immigration, Foote had identified the population concerns which Barbados authorities would increasingly articulate from late 1863 as they attempted to stop the labor exodus from their island.

During the second week of August 1863, the first two boats for Antigua left Barbados carrying seventy-two emigrants, of whom over 90 percent were male.<sup>39</sup> Their arrival was welcomed by the *Antigua Times* which called for a greater emphasis on family migration, as "the great want of this colony, certainly, is an accession of agricultural labor but we want at the same time, an enlarged permanent population, and in no way can this be better served than by encouraging the settlement of the Barbadians in families."<sup>40</sup> Such support for family migration was primarily motivated by the belief that it would limit labor mobility from the plantations and make migration more acceptable to authorities in Barbados who were concerned about the abandonment of dependent family members.<sup>41</sup> The direct encouragement of family migration to Antigua had a significant impact on the composition of emigration from Barbados (see Table 1).

Table 1. Emigration from Barbados, Summer 1863<sup>42</sup>

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Adult Male</i>	<i>Adult Female</i>	<i>Child</i>
St. Croix	1,091	701 (64.3%)	304 (27.9%)	86 (7.9%)
Antigua	806	396 (49.1%)	196 (24.3%)	214 (26.6%)

When the news of this massive migration during July and August 1863 reached England, Colonial Secretary Lord Newcastle commented that "it is interesting to see emigration setting in from overpeopled Barbados to its under-peopled neighbours."<sup>43</sup> In fact, as Governor Hamilton had previously made clear to Newcastle, Antigua was hardly "under-peopled" given its high population density of 337 people per square mile in 1861.<sup>44</sup> Also forgotten by

39. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

40. *Antigua Times*, August 13, 1863, p. 2.

41. *Antigua Times*, August 28, 1863, p. 3; *Antigua Times*, September 26, 1863, p. 2. In the wake of emancipation some Antiguan planters had actively encouraged family reunification as a means of securing a larger and more reliable workforce (Smith 1988:29-32).

42. MHA, October 6, 1863, p. 62.

43. Walker to Newcastle, August 9, 1863, CO 28/196.

44. Barbados in 1861 claimed a population density of 920 people per square mile (*The Reports made for the Year 1861 to the Secretary of State having the Department of the Colonies. Part 1: West Indies and Mauritius*, London, 1863, pp. 30, 75).

Newcastle was the recurrent threat of drought in Antigua itself. At the very time when Antiguan planters were importing laborers from drought-stricken Barbados, they were themselves in the midst of an “alarming drought.”<sup>45</sup>

The conditions faced by the migrants from Barbados were expressed in a letter by the newly arrived James Bovell, a laborer at Delaps estate, encouraging his wife to join him in Antigua. Despite receiving half an acre of land to grow his own provisions, Bovell wrote that,

our employer is to feed us for 6 months, as no food is on the estate nor in the ground. It is very dry, for months they have had no rain and everywhere is suffering for want of water. I shall be very glad to get you dear ... you must bring some corn flour, potatoes, limes, yams, peppers and some pepper sauce ... I am making out pretty well ... but it is hard, I only wish I had come down a few months ago. I like this place very much, and I hope we shall soon have rain to plant our ground ...<sup>46</sup>

In Barbados, rain would have given workers like Bovell renewed work on the estates, but in Antigua under contract of indenture which assured regular wages of two “bits” a day, he was more concerned that the change of weather would allow his own independent domestic cultivation.

#### COLONIAL RIVALRIES AND THE REDEFINITION OF MIGRANT LABOR TO BRITISH GUIANA AND JAMAICA

The news of Barbadian emigration to St. Croix and Antigua rapidly spread across the Caribbean during August 1863, encouraging other colonial governments to formulate their own immigration schemes. In British Guiana, reports of disorder and heavy emigration from Barbados were initially greeted by the *Royal Gazette* with the editorial comment that “here is a good opportunity for our neighbours of Suriname to procure immigrants.”<sup>47</sup> As in Antigua, Barbadian events were rapidly incorporated into pre-existing debates and concerns, and the end of slavery in Suriname in July 1863 had generated considerable concern in British Guiana that the indentured immigrant workforce so expensively imported into the British colony would be poached by neighboring Dutch planters.<sup>48</sup> Fears in British Guiana of desertion to Suriname resulted in the intensification of restrictions on movement between the two territories, the extension of indentureship terms for African immigrants, and the comprehensive consolidation of legislation on inden-

45. *Antigua Times*, August 22, 1863, p. 3.

46. *Antigua Times*, October 3, 1863, p. 3.

47. *Royal Gazette*, August 8, 1863, p. 2.

48. *Royal Gazette*, June 13, 1863, pp. 2-3.

tured immigration.<sup>49</sup> While several hundred Barbadians were recruited for estates in Suriname during 1863, they objected to labor conditions in the colony and were eventually sent on to British Guiana.<sup>50</sup>

A second debate which fundamentally shaped the efforts of authorities in British Guiana to develop new sources of migrant labor during the early 1860s were the concerns stimulated by declining immigration from Maderia, Africa, and China (Rodney 1977:4). American debates during the Civil War over “contrabands,” or the former slaves of the Confederate South, reanimated discussions in British Guiana on the possibility of settlements by African-American immigrants. However, like the privately sponsored efforts which followed emancipation, immigration schemes initially aimed at black Americans were rapidly redirected to focus on West Indian migrants (Moore 1987:44). After heated public debate over migration from the United States in 1862, by late 1863 Guiana’s government had decided to seek five hundred laborers from Barbados while also attempting to establish recruiting agencies in North America.<sup>51</sup> Importantly, under the Ordinance of October 28, 1863, labor recruitment from the British West Indies and North America was to be funded by the colony’s immigration fund in the same way as indentured immigration from Asia and Africa.

The governor of British Guiana promoting the 1863 ordinance was Francis Hincks, who had previously criticized indentured immigration while serving in Barbados. Reversing his early public position on immigration, Hincks wrote that “this Ordinance simply extends to the United States and to the British Colonies the same provisions which are in force with regard to other classes of immigration except as to the length of indenture, which is limited to three years.”<sup>52</sup> In seeking to extend British Guiana’s well-developed system of indentured immigration to recruitment from within the region,

49. These restrictions even extended to Indian immigrants whose contracts of indenture had expired and who sought to migrate to Suriname as free labor (*The Creole*, September 23, 1863, p. 3).

50. “Rapport de la Commission envoyée à la Barbade pour étudier les moyens de diriger l’émigration des travailleurs de cette colonie vers la Martinique” (hereafter “Rapport de la Commission”), FM/Gen 148/1243, Centre des Archives d’Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France, p. 13; Roberts (1955:260) estimated that 1,200 Barbadians migrated to Suriname in the decade following 1863.

51. Hincks to Newcastle, November 18, 1863, CO 111/347.

52. Hincks to Newcastle, November 18, 1863, CO 111/347; An Ordinance to Provide for the Introduction of Immigrants from the British West Indies and from the Continent of North America, No 14 of 1863, *The Official Gazette of British Guiana*, 1863, p. 1506-7. Both the United States and West Indies were also identified as sources of indentured immigrants in Suriname during the same year (Ordinance Concerning the Control and the Introduction of Free Laborers into Suriname, March 19, 1863, No. 71).



Hincks argued he was merely following the example of Antigua which had also contracted Barbadians under indentures of three years. Anticipating the enactment of the new ordinance, Hincks commissioned Barbadian Edward Walcott to act as immigration agent for the colony and to recruit workers on three-year contracts, giving preference to families who sought to migrate.<sup>53</sup>

Significantly, this conception of state-controlled immigration from the Americas generated considerable opposition within British Guiana. Many merchants in the colony, whose interests lay in American trade and shipping, argued that the new migration from North America should be recruited privately rather than by the state. The mayor of Georgetown called a public meeting on the same day that the new immigration ordinance was promulgated (October 28, 1863) to organize a petition in favor of free immigration by black Americans without the costs of immigration agents or constant state regulation. At the public meeting, the leading speaker for free immigration was Frederick Winter, who rejected the new ordinance as too cumbersome, and called instead for a privately organized system of bounty immigration with no indenture contracts.<sup>54</sup> Winter estimated that each migrant from Barbados would cost 25 dollars under an indenture of three years compared to only 5 dollars for passage as a free migrant. He argued "that although you may find the Barbados immigrant ready enough to indenture, you will find him equally ready to shake off the indenture when he sees an opportunity ... we will not get three months work from him."<sup>55</sup> Winter's scheme of private immigration was strongly opposed by Governor Hincks, who believed that indenture gave security of employment to both the employer and employee, as well as ensuring the state an important regulatory role. Hincks also argued that Winter's plans enjoyed little support amongst the plantocracy of British Guiana who remained committed to indenture as one of their most important sources of labor.<sup>56</sup>

However, at the same time as these internal criticisms from within British Guiana, Hincks found his indentured scheme for West Indian migration

53. MHA, November 3, 1863, p 108.

54. *The Creole*, October 30, 1863, p. 2.

55. *The Creole*, October 30, 1863, p. 3; Similar reasoning was given in Trinidad, where the *Port of Spain Gazette* argued that there was no need for state-sponsored migration from Barbados for two reasons: "the immigrants helped over by private people are more likely to be of the right sort and to settle down to steady labour, than any that could be collected by Government agency ... we think that the immigration fund ought to be restricted to bringing in labourers, whose services can with moderate certainty be secured for estates work by indenture. Such indenture we maintain to be practically futile in the case of any labourers brought here from Barbados" (extract reproduced in the *Royal Gazette*, December 8, 1863, p. 3).

56. Hincks to Newcastle, November 18, 1863, CO 111/347.

threatened by the changing policies of the Barbados government. In early October 1863, Governor Walker had publicly defended the emigration of two thousand Barbadians in less than two months. Addressing the Barbados House of Assembly, Walker detailed the movements to St. Croix and Antigua, before arguing that “for the present there is reason to believe that Emigration to both these places has ceased and the abstraction of labour which these lists represent with so dense a population as ours, is absolutely imperceptible.”<sup>57</sup> To the Colonial Office in London, Walker had earlier dismissed the departure of 1,400 laborers in August with the remark “we can very well spare them,” while even in late October he wrote of “a moderate Emigration to the neighbouring Islands.”<sup>58</sup> In November 1863, Governor Walker reversed his position on the mass emigration which had begun only four months earlier. Fearing that British Guiana’s migration scheme would result in an exodus, the temporary tolerance of immigration agents and signing-on bonuses in Barbados was officially ended. Also underpinning Walker’s change of policy was the promise of a new record sugar crop in 1864, and the “electric effect” of “the sudden rise in the value of sugar.”<sup>59</sup>

Significantly, Barbadian authorities at the end of 1863 framed their rejection of migration under contract with the language of free labor and social dislocation. In refusing to allow the immigration agent for British Guiana to commence recruiting, Governor Walker argued that “there is now sufficient employment for all hands, while the system of bounties upon which the whole operation rests is beginning to unsettle the minds of the peasantry and is disturbing their ordinary habits of industry.”<sup>60</sup> Significantly, the bounties that were the focus for Walker’s criticisms were in fact bonuses given to the workers themselves as an incentive to commit to long-term contracts, while the long-established principles to which he referred originated in the very different bounty systems paid by Trinidad and Guiana to ships’ captains and immigration agents as commission to recruit migrant laborers in the wake of emancipation (Richardson 1980:400-1).

Equally, Walker claimed that the emigration of nearly three thousand laborers had resulted in a significant labor shortage in Barbados, despite its extreme population density.<sup>61</sup> The emigration of adult males had resulted in the desertion of wives and children, the abandonment of the elderly and

57. MHA, October 6, 1863, p. 62.

58. Walker to Newcastle, September 25, 1863, CO 28/197; Walker to Newcastle, October 21, 1863, CO 28/197.

59. *Royal Gazette*, December 8, 1863, p. 2; *The Times*, August 18, 1863, p. 2.

60. Walker to Newcastle, November 7, 1863, CO 28/197.

61. Walker argued that of an estimated 34,000 field laborers, 10,000 were women and only half of the remainder were able bodied, and of these far fewer were reliable workers (Walker to Newcastle, November 23, 1863, CO 28/197).

infirm.<sup>62</sup> Such rhetoric was undercut by Walker's own emigration statistics (see Table 1), which revealed that a substantial component of such movements was migration by women and by families. Fueled by such arguments, a new act to amend the laws relating to emigration from Barbados was passed by the local Assembly at the start of 1864, explicitly targeting "the appointment of Agents who are to act upon the bounty system."<sup>63</sup> British authorities insisted that the local act be amended to allow private parties to recruit labor, and to revoke the absolute ban on signing-on bonuses.<sup>64</sup> However, during 1864, the Colonial Office in London allowed the Barbados government to reject immigration schemes from British Guiana, Antigua, St. Croix, and Jamaica.<sup>65</sup>

Faced with British Guiana's efforts to recruit Barbadian migrants, Governor Walker had complained to his superiors in Britain that,

I am quite sure that if this interline system of enticing laborers from one British West India Colony to another were to be legalized, it would be the signal of such disquiet and ill blood in these parts. So far from being advantageous to the laborer, my opinion is that it would only tend to unhinge and destroy the little industrial character that belongs to him.<sup>66</sup>

In fact, the competition between colonies for migrant labor directly fueled a redefinition of regional immigration from indentured to free labor. Unable to recruit Barbadian laborers with a state-subsidized bounty for a three-year contract of indenture, Governor Hincks changed his instructions to his immigration agent Walcott to offer free passage to British Guiana and the choice of employer for a six-month contract.<sup>67</sup> Just as Walker had adopted

62. Walker to Newcastle, November 7, 1863, CO 28/197; The following passage significantly appeared in the "Crime" section of the 1863 Blue Book for Barbados: "The tendency of the Emigration to which I have referred in a former part of this paper is of course to take away the able bodied laborer, and to leave upon our hands the old, the infirm, the sickly, and the young. And the numberless cases of distress and destitution which now present themselves are in 19 cases out of 20, or even in a larger proportion owing to desertion by parents and other natural protectors who have left the Island. The recent Emigration to Demerara has been particularly fruitful of such cases, when we hear of the teeming population of Barbados therefore, people must not jump to the conclusion that it consists only of a redundancy of labor" (Walker to Cardwell, October 31, 1864, CO 29/199).

63. Walker to Newcastle, April 19, 1864, CO 28/198.

64. Walker to Cardwell, October 6, 1864, CO 28/199.

65. Copy August 8, 1864, Walker to Birch, August 12, 1864, CO 28/198.

66. Walker to Newcastle, November 23, 1863, CO 28/197.

67. Hincks provocatively stated that restrictions on indentured workers in British Guiana were "not practically much, if at all, greater than those imposed on those labourers in Barbados who reside on Estates" (Walker to Newcastle, November 23, 1863, copy November 7, 1863, Hincks to Walker, CO 28/197).

the language of free labor in seeking to curtail bounty-based recruitment, now Hincks deployed the same rhetoric to justify the importation by the colonial state of Barbadian workers.

Hincks's scheme of free labor migration resulted in a new surge of emigration to British Guiana following the summer harvest of 1864. By the end of September 1864, it was estimated that almost 2,800 Barbadian migrants had arrived in British Guiana, over 80 percent of whom were adults.<sup>68</sup> While these migrants received the same "comforts and medical care" as indentured immigrants, their shorter contracts marked the origins of a new seasonal workforce whose circular migration was shaped by the distinct rhythms of harvest in Barbados and British Guiana.<sup>69</sup> Differences in rainfall meant that crop time (when wages were highest and employment most available) was spread between January and June in Barbados, whereas in Guiana this occurred between September and December (Levy 1980:10; Rodney 1981:4, 48; Watts 1987:176). The environmental contrasts between the two colonies were reinforced during the 1870s by factory modernization in British Guiana, such as the adoption of vacuum-pan and centrifugal technologies, which intensified the seasonal need for cane cutters during a concentrated harvest period.

Walter Rodney (1981:31-59) has shown how the expansion of plantation production in British Guiana during the late nineteenth century was fueled by increasingly specialized migrant labor forces. While indentured Indians resident on the sugar estates were responsible for the daily cultivation of the crop, the escalating demands of harvest fueled the seasonal migration of Barbadians as skilled cane cutters. Such segmentation of plantation employment meant that Barbadians claimed the highest-paying tasks, while their departures after the harvest enabled them to avoid the increased disease rates of the wet season (Johnson 1973:12-16). Between 1863 and 1875, the government of British Guiana subsidized the passage of an estimated 21,000 emigrants from Barbados, and it was not until the severe economic depression of 1885 that Hincks's scheme for Barbadian labor was abandoned (Rodney 1977:4-5).

As Barbadian immigration to Guiana intensified in late 1864, several Kingston merchants were promoting their own scheme for Barbadian immigration to Jamaica. Working from privately raised funds, a Jamaican agent was able to recruit 150 migrants who left Barbados at the end of August 1864 on the ship *Swordfish*.<sup>70</sup> These migrants were promised wages of up to a dollar a day in Jamaica, and they were encouraged by the availability of land at prices as low as five dollars an acre. The scheme echoed Jamaican

68. *The Morning Journal*, October 28, 1864, p. 3.

69. *The Morning Journal*, September 23, 1864, p. 2.

70. *The Morning Journal*, September 6, 1864, p. 2.

experiments with European immigration in the 1830s, for as one observer in Barbados, reported, “the Principle upon which the Jamaican emigration is conducted, apply rather to the occupancy of uncultivated land than to the supply of labor for sugar estates.”<sup>71</sup> From Barbados, migrants traveled without contracts, although they were committed to repaying their passage money and any other advances of funds they had received.<sup>72</sup> The Jamaican immigration scheme therefore contrasted to other recruitment efforts in Barbados because of its initial private sponsorship, the absence of a contract, and the intended employment for the immigrants.<sup>73</sup> Significantly, this migration never became the influx of laborers desired by Jamaican authorities, as the decision of the local legislature and Jamaica’s governor, Edward Eyre, to financially support the recruitment, was used by the governor of Barbados to declare the agent’s activities illegal.<sup>74</sup>

Amongst the emigrants to Jamaica at the end of 1864 was a group of mechanics and artisans from Christ Church (Barbados), who previously attempted to migrate to Liberia during the crisis of 1863.<sup>75</sup> To contemporaries, such as Governor Walker in Barbados, it seemed as though the absence of long indentures in Jamaica and British Guiana had changed the composition of migration from the island.<sup>76</sup> When Francis du Bois visited Barbados seeking to restart indentured immigration to St. Croix in early September 1864, Walker rejected his request by arguing that the continuing movements to Guiana and Jamaica were by skilled workers, “people about Town,” and not field laborers.<sup>77</sup> Walker’s reasoning became enshrined as demographic

71. Du Bois to Birch, August 25, 1864, Koloniernes Centralbestyrelse (hereafter KC) #909, Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen.

72. As one Jamaican newspaper proclaimed “neither they nor any of their fellow-countrymen will be under the control of immigration agents; they will be free settlers – free in every sense of the word, and subject only to the operation of laws which are enacted by the legislature for the general protection of society” (*The Morning Journal*, September 21, 1864, p. 2). Within two months of the Barbadians settling in the counties of Surry and Cornwall, there had been protest meetings in Port Royal by the Jamaican peasantry over the preferential treatment to free immigrants, while news had reached Barbados of the migrant’s disappointment in Jamaican conditions (*The Morning Journal*, October 31, 1864, p. 2; *The Morning Journal*, September 21, 1864, p. 2; Du Bois to Birch, September 26, 1864, KC #909).

73. These differences were perhaps due to the 1858 attempt in Jamaica to restart indentured immigration from India, as after the arrival of 4,646 Indians the scheme was canceled in early 1863 because planters were not able to bear the costs of recruitment and employment (Green 1986:175-76).

74. *The Morning Journal*, November 17, 1864, p. 3; Roberts 1955:255.

75. *Royal Gazette*, April 30, 1864, p. 3; Karch 2002:8.

76. Walker to Cardwell, October 31, 1864, CO 29/199.

77. Du Bois to Birch, September 9, 1864, KC #909.

fact when his successor, Governor Rawson (1872:9), completed a detailed census of the island's population in 1871. Certainly the shift away from indenture in 1864, drew other sections of Barbadian society into leaving the island, but Walker provided little evidence that such a change was as absolute as he claimed in denying further applications for migrant labor.

Frustrated by Walker's intransigent opposition to indentured recruitment for St. Croix, Du Bois examined the mass flow of migrants to British Guiana and wrote to his employers that

These terms are in no respect in accordance with our views on this subject, the emigrant [*sic*] receive no bounty, enter into no contract, and acting entirely by their own free will, no agent appears in the transaction, the parties conducting this supply of emigrants simply state the terms on which emigrants will be received on their arrival, and supply the vessels necessary for transport – and the redundant and suffering population of this island crowd the vessels daily to overflowing.<sup>78</sup>

In contrast, indentures remained a necessity for planters in St. Croix as their sugar harvest overlapped with Barbados, while they lacked the milling technology that made short seasonal migration possible for British Guiana. These material conditions resulted in the continued insistence on long-term labor contracts by the St. Croix plantocracy, so that unable to secure migrants in Barbados, their recruitment efforts turned after 1864 to the nearby British Leeward Islands (Tyson 1995:138-43).

Francis du Bois had arrived in Barbados in July 1864 confident of obtaining indentured immigrants from the island, however within two months that optimism had faded, and not simply because of Governor Walker's hostility. As du Bois wrote back to St. Croix, prospects for the recruitment of Barbadian laborers had declined by late September for "the season is too far advanced – food becoming abundant – labour more in demand."<sup>79</sup> These profound seasonal changes in material conditions were central to the debates over migration from Barbados during the mid-1860s. Out of crop, conditions on the island were described as a Malthusian nightmare of overpopulation, underemployment, and food shortage.<sup>80</sup> During harvest, the Barbados elite claimed that any emigration from the island would undermine the labor supplies need for sugar production. These rhythms of demographic debate in the British West Indies – of overpopulation and labor shortage – were themselves changing during the 1860s, as new milling technology concentrated the harvest in British Guiana and Trinidad, which generated new opportunities for seasonal migration.

78. Du Bois to Birch, August 25, 1864, KC #909.

79. Du Bois to Birch, September 26, 1864, KC #909.

80. "Rapport de la Commission," pp. 7-9.

Focusing on the mass movements in the nineteenth century of Asian indentured immigrants to the Caribbean, historians have rarely examined the other attempts, experiments, and failed schemes for migrant labor in the region. Yet these projects often overlapped, so that at the same time that Francis Hincks promoted the codification of Indian immigration regulations in British Guiana, he also sought to extend indentureship to Barbados. Indenture terms were often transplanted from one migrant group to another, as government officials and planters sought new sources for immigration in the early 1860s with the resources and attitudes accumulated during previous debates. However, this extension of indentureship to Barbadian migrants was rapidly undermined by the competition between the West Indian colonies over labor supply, by internal tensions within the different colonies over the cost and control of migrant labor, and by the agency of the migrants themselves. Ultimately, it was the failed attempts by Barbadian authorities in 1864 to block mass emigration from their island which marked a new divergence between currents of regional and indentured immigration in the British West Indies.

#### REFERENCES

- BECKLES, HILARY MCD, 2004. *Great House Rules: Landless Emancipation and Workers Protest in Barbados 1838-1928*. Kingston: Ian Randle.
- BOLLAND, O. NIGEL, 1981. Systems of Domination after Slavery: The Control of Land and Labour in the British West Indies after 1838. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23:591-619.
- CARTER, HENDERSON, 1996. Food Riots and Labor Protest in Post-Slavery Barbados: An Analysis of the 1863 Riots. Unpubl. paper, Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians, Barbados.
- CURTIN, PHILIP D., 1955. *Two Jamaicas: The Role of Ideas in a Tropical Colony, 1830-1865*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- DEERR, NOEL, 1949. *The History of Sugar, Vol. 1*. London: Chapman and Hall.
- , 1950. *The History of Sugar, Vol. 2*. London: Chapman and Hall.
- DYDE, BRIAN, 2000. *A History of Antigua: The Unsuspected Isle*. London: Macmillan.
- FLETCHER, L.P., 1980. Barbados Emigration Policy from Emancipation to Independence, 1838 to 1936. Unpubl. paper, Conference of the Caribbean Studies Association, Curaçao.
- GREEN, WILLIAM A., 1986. Plantation Society and Indentured Labor: The Jamaican Case, 1834-1865. In P.C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and Migration: Indentured Labour Before and After Slavery*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, pp.163-86.

HALL, DOUGLAS, 1971. *Five of the Leewards, 1834-1870: The Major Problems of the Postemancipation Period in Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat, Nevis and St Kitts*. Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press.

HIGMAN, B.W., 1982. Slavery and the Development of Demographic Theory in the Age of the Industrial Revolution. In James Walvin (ed.), *Slavery and British Society 1776-1846*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, pp. 164-94.

HINCKS, FRANCIS, 1859. *The Results of Negro Emancipation: A Speech delivered at a Public Meeting held in London, August 1 1859: The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery by the Parliament of Great Britain*. n.p.

JOHNSON, HOWARD, 1973. Barbadian Immigrants in Trinidad, 1870-1897. *Caribbean Studies* 13(3):5-30.

KARCH, CECILIA, 2002. The Pull of the Fatherland: Migration of Barbadians Back to Africa in the 1860s. Unpubl. paper, Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians, Bahamas.

LAURENCE, K.O., 1965. The Evolution of Long-Term Labor Contracts in Trinidad and British Guiana 1834-1863. *Jamaican Historical Review* 5:9-27.

—, 1971. *Immigration into the West Indies in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*. Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press.

LEVY, CLAUDE, 1980. *Emancipation, Sugar, and Federalism: Barbados and the West Indies, 1833-1876*. Gainesville: University Presses of Florida.

LOOK LAI, WALTON, 1993. *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838-1918*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

LOWENTHAL, DAVID, 1957. The Population of Barbados. *Social and Economic Studies* 6:445-501.

MARSHALL, DAWN, 1984. Migration within the Eastern Caribbean, 1835-1980. Unpubl. paper, Conference on Cultural Contacts and Migration in the Caribbean, Barbados.

MOORE, BRIAN, 1987. *Race, Power and Social Segmentation in Colonial Society: Guyana After Slavery, 1838-1891*. New York: Gordon and Breach.

NORTHROP, DAVID, 1995. *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism, 1834-1922*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

RAWSON, R.W., 1872. *Report upon the Population of Barbados, 1851-1871*. Barbados: n.p.

RICHARDSON, BONHAM, 1980. Freedom and Migration in the Leeward Caribbean, 1838-48. *Journal of Historical Geography* 6:391-408.

ROBERTS, G.W., 1955. Emigration from the Island of Barbados. *Social and Economic Studies* 4:245-88.



RODNEY, WALTER, 1977. Barbadian Immigration into British Guiana 1863-1924. Unpubl. paper, Conference of the Association of Caribbean Historians, Barbados.

—, 1981. *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

SEWELL, WILLIAM G., 1862. *The Ordeal of Free Labor in the British West Indies*. London: Sampson Low. [Orig. 1861.]

SHERIDAN, RICHARD B., 1989. Changing Sugar Technology and the Labor Nexus in the British Caribbean, 1750-1900, with Special Reference to Barbados and Jamaica. *New West Indian Guide* 63:59-93.

SIRCAR, K.K., 1971. Emigration of Indian Indentured Labor to the Danish West Indian Island at St Croix, 1863-68. *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 19(2):136-37.

SMITH, K.B. & F.C. SMITH (eds.), 1988. *To Shoot Hard Labor: The Life and Times of Samuel Smith, an Antiguan Workingman 1877-1982*. Toronto: Edan's Publishers. [Orig. 1986.]

TINKER, HUGH, 1993. *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830-1920*. London: Hansib. [Orig 1974.]

TYSON, GEORGE, 1995. "Our Side": Caribbean Immigrant Laborers and the Transition to Free Labor on St Croix, 1848-79. In Karen Fog Olwig (ed.), *Small Islands, Large Questions: Society, Culture & Resistance in the Postemancipation Caribbean*. London: Frank Cass, pp. 135-60.

WATSON, KARL, 2000. "Walk and Nyam Buckras": Poor White Emigration from Barbados, 1834-1900. *Journal of Caribbean History* 34:137-46.

WATTS, DAVID, 1987. *The West Indies: Patterns of Development, Culture and Environmental Change since 1492*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

LAURENCE BROWN  
Centre for Cross-Cultural Research  
Australian National University  
Old Canberra House, Canberra  
ACT 0200, Australia  
<Laurence.Brown@anu.edu.au>



GERT OOSTINDIE

THE SLIPPERY PATHS OF COMMEMORATION AND  
HERITAGE TOURISM: THE NETHERLANDS, GHANA,  
AND THE REDISCOVERY OF ATLANTIC SLAVERY

The last decade has witnessed a rediscovery in international politics of the Atlantic slave trade and the slave systems of the Americas. This is not to say that the issue had been buried in the previous centuries. The memory of this dreadful episode in the history of mankind has been preserved and transmitted in oral traditions, landmarks, archives, and libraries on the three continents involved. Moreover, scholarly work on the Middle Passage and its consequences has a long and venerable tradition. Even so the re-emergence of the issue on the international agenda is unique.

The first time the Atlantic slave trade and New World slavery were truly on the Western agenda was at the time of the abolition debates at the closing of the eighteenth century. The context of these intense and protracted debates cannot be fully understood without taking the agency of the enslaved Africans in the Americas into account – an agency most dramatically expressed in the Haitian Revolution, but in many ways all over “plantation America.” Yet those permitted to speak and those most likely to be heard at the time in these polemics were mainly the white elites of the Americas as well as politicians, specific religious denominations, and working-class associations in the European nations involved.

The contemporary agenda of the debate is less tangible and the field of participants is wider. Today, the African diaspora is the major instigator of the reconsideration of this past and its legacies, certainly more so than the reluctant former slave-trading nations but also more than the ambivalent African nations involved. In this essay I attempt to illustrate this point in a discussion of the rediscovery of the Atlantic slave trade and American slavery as part of Dutch history and the way Ghana is included in this appraisal. This analysis includes some observations on the divergence between the scholarly and the grass-roots interpretations of this past.<sup>1</sup>

1. This article is a revised version of a paper presented at the conference on “The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Landmarks, Legacies and Expectations,” Accra, Ghana, August 30-September 2, 2004. I would like to thank Dmitri van de Besselaar, Michel Doortmont,

## THE REDISCOVERY OF ATLANTIC SLAVERY

It has been pointed out time and again: in world history, slavery has been the rule rather than the unfortunate exception. Among all of the systems of slavery worldwide through the centuries, the Atlantic slave trade and African slavery in the Americas are certainly the most extensively studied variants. The Atlantic system had several unique and horrifying features.

First, there is the great and unprecedented number of people forced to move over a relatively short period of three-and-a-half centuries.<sup>2</sup> Decades after the “numbers game” began, there is still no absolute scholarly consensus on the numbers involved, and outside academia figures posited are often far higher than within. Authoritative scholarly estimates now put the total of enslaved Africans embarked at around 11 million, with just over 9.5 million actually landing alive in the Americas. The number of Africans killed or having perished on the slave routes in Africa is a matter of speculation. Many, including the UNESCO Slave Trade Project, estimate that the total number of Africans enslaved with the objective of bringing them to the Americas may well be put at 20 million.

Second, there is the logistical sophistication of a trade system linking a changing set of strongly contrasting political entities in Africa, the Americas, and Europe, one of which was only recently known to the so-called Old World. On the African continent, new political configurations developed because of the emerging transatlantic trade. In the Americas, new colonies were literally created, under the whip, by enslaved Africans. Capitalism, globalization, and the intensified use of a form of labor exploitation often mistaken for an economic anachronism went hand in hand.

Third, the Atlantic slave trade is one of the most salient examples ever of racism as a justification for economic exploitation. Christianity is not incompatible with slavery in itself, and there is a long history within Christianity of whites enslaving whites. Yet in the centuries preceding the “discovery” and colonization of the New World, the European countries most involved in the Atlantic slave trade had abolished slavery and bonded labor in their own countries. By then, they had come to regard the enslavement of fellow Europeans as being at odds with Christianity and their own conception of

Alex van Stipriaan, and Piet Emmer and the editors of the *NWIG* for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.

2. The volume of the slave trade from sub-Saharan Africa to the Arabic world may have been of the same size as the transatlantic slave trade, or perhaps even greater (14 million). The Arab slave trade, however, extended over a far longer period (ca. A.D. 650 to the early twentieth century) and thus did not have the same intensity (Segal 2001:55-57). There has been less study of the slave trade in the Arabic world because there are fewer documents on it. An additional explanation is to be found in contemporary politics.

human rights. Few, however, objected to the idea of re-introducing a similar system elsewhere, mainly far from their own countries and subjugating outsiders conveniently depicted as an altogether different and inferior species of mankind. Occasionally religious, humanitarian, and philosophical objections were raised, but it would take three centuries before they translated into decisive action. By then many millions of enslaved Africans had been forced to make the horrendous Middle Passage.

Although the system had unique features, a better explanation for the renewed contemporary interest in the Atlantic slave trade is the three legacies it left, or is felt to have left: the tangible inheritance of an African diaspora in the Americas and Europe; the enduring effect of the racism that justified ideologically the slave trade; and widely divergent economic situations of the three continents involved. Many recent debates, whether among scholars or the general public, are informed by ideas about these legacies. Some ideas put forward are more convincing than others, but as we know, the significance of beliefs often has little to do with their empirical validity.

Whether the Atlantic slave trade has been actually “rediscovered” is disputable. Centuries of oral tradition both in Africa and the African diaspora have shaped and transmitted a body of knowledge and interpretations which only fairly recently has attracted due scholarly attention. Moreover, scholarly research on the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the Americas has a very long tradition, dating back to the times the “peculiar institution” was still intact. Primarily because African Americans have been so central to U.S. history since early colonization, the issue was never allowed to be suppressed – even if the dominance of “white” versions of U.S. history has been, and for good reasons continues to be, a source of African American frustration and anger (Eyerman 2001, Eichstadt & Small 2002).

In contrast, in the European countries that once pioneered the Atlantic slave trade, the “odious trade” and its legacies have been conspicuously absent from public memory until fairly recently. Certainly, British harbor towns have had black communities dating back to the times of the slave trade, and in these towns the experience of slavery was passed on orally. Likewise, British scholarship has never abandoned the study of the trade and American slavery – conveniently, there was the ground-breaking abolition at the end of the story to praise and explain. Yet in Britain in the 1930s, when isolated West Indian historians such as Eric Williams and C.L.R. James were studying Caribbean slavery in Europe, public interest in slavery did not revive. There was a revival only decades later, in the wake of the post-World War II Caribbean migration to Britain, whereby it gained a constituency interested in this past that was its own.

The Netherlands and France witnessed a similar reawakening only in the 1990s. By then, both countries were home to Caribbean communities of fairly recent settlement numbering several hundreds of thousands. Not only did

these communities demand that their past be recognized as a part of national history, but because they were the embodiment of this history, the Dutch and French were increasingly unable to claim ignorance or profess disinterest. National media and politicians took up the issue, interrogated by Caribbean intellectuals and spokespeople possessing in abundance the cultural capital requisite to make themselves heard in the postcolonial metropolis.

In this ideological climate, the French Assemblée Nationale declared the Atlantic slave trade, and by definition its own involvement in it, a crime against humanity (1998) – a symbolic gesture devoid of material consequences, as would be confirmed during the 2004 bicentennial of the Haitian Revolution. Similarly, since 1999 the Dutch government has repeatedly declared its “remorse” for the nation’s involvement in the Atlantic slave trade and slavery. A national monument to commemorate this past was erected in Amsterdam, on the first of July 2001, Emancipation Day. The Dutch queen and prime minister were at the inauguration, which greatly added to its symbolic significance. Nevertheless, successive Dutch governments have refused to discuss material reparations.

Other European countries have been less inclined to weigh up their past involvement in Atlantic slavery. There is some interest in the issue from the minor players, in particular Denmark. Because, however, the former Danish Caribbean colonies were sold to the United States almost a century ago, there has been no Caribbean migration to Denmark, hence little pressure to prioritize the issue.

More interesting are Portugal, the foremost slave-trading nation, and Spain, which did not legislate the abolition of slavery in its major Caribbean colony, Cuba, until the 1880s. Apparently neither of the two countries is inclined to join in the self-accusatory gestures made by their fellow Western European nations. Given that the Iberian countries indulged fairly recently in festive commemorations of their colonial history that were anything but politically correct, this does not come as a surprise. According to the Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam, the Portuguese practically “ruined their relations” with the Asian countries involved by trying to impose a celebratory tone on their jubilee, five centuries after Vasco da Gama’s spectacular maritime exploits, of Portuguese-Asian relations.<sup>3</sup>

To some degree, the Spanish celebrations of the 1492 “discovery” of the Americas also backfired. Though the events were eventually rebaptized into a euphemistic *encuentro* (encounter), in Spain the celebratory overtones remained evident. Not so elsewhere, particularly in the Americas. Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995:118) astutely observed that “the most striking feature of the quincentennial was the loudness of dissenting voices world-wide.”

3. Sanjay Subrahmanyam in a debate on the Dutch India Company at Amsterdam University, 24 June 2002.

It must be admitted that neither of the two countries has experienced migration from the former slave colonies in the Americas to the extent that Britain, France, or the Netherlands did. Therefore there are few *afrolatinos* to remind the Spanish and the Portuguese of their involvement in slavery, and even fewer considered Iberian enough to be entrusted a voice in the definition of the nation. Hence, in contrast to British, French, and Dutch gestures, however half-hearted they may be, Madrid and Lisbon are not giving any such signals. Symptomatically, the first market house of the Atlantic slave trade in Lagos, southern Portugal, bears only a small sign “Mercado de escravos,” under a sign in the same style but with larger lettering saying “Galeria.” The former heart of the slave market does indeed house a nondescript art gallery with no relation whatsoever to the building’s past function.<sup>4</sup>

Hence it was mainly the three northwestern European slave-trading nations, as well as President Clinton’s United States that, in the late 1990s, were weighing up their own transatlantic pasts and actually condemning events that had earlier been glorified or glossed over in deliberate omission.<sup>5</sup>

Why did the slave trade and slavery acquire the status of acknowledged subjects for the West’s justifiable self-criticism? The horror of this past is indisputable, as is the West’s guilt, and the unmistakable hypocrisy of this stage in its history. But if horror and hypocrisy had been the only criteria, other episodes in national pasts would also have been in line for such public gestures. It undoubtedly helped that the Atlantic slave trade and slavery are completely over, and that they were abolished long ago – 170 years today for Britain, almost 160 for France, and 140 years for the United States and the Netherlands, so these sins of the forebears seem to be at a safe distance. In addition, there is always the reassuring argument that at least “we” ended it ourselves and, moreover, that Africans also participated and were therefore responsible, and that “they” continued much longer, even up to the present day.

Horror, hypocrisy, a thing of the past, space for reflection: on the face of it a fine combination of arguments in favor of a critical reassessment of this painful past. And yet these are neither the only, nor the weightiest of arguments. Of far more direct relevance was the appeal from the descendants of Africans who were once taken to the New World as slaves. By the 1990s their age-old rage could not possibly be ignored or downplayed. In the United States there was the backdrop of the exasperatingly slow and unbalanced process of emancipation of the African American population – and old story with increasingly sharp edges.

4. Personal observation and documentation, May 2003.

5. The remainder of this section is mainly taken from my introduction to *Facing Up to the Past* (Oostindie 2001).

In contrast, the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands were confronted with an altogether new phenomenon. The post-World War II exodus from the Caribbean<sup>6</sup> had brought colonial history and particularly the slavery past home. The metropolis was suddenly faced with confrontational and well-articulated demands for recognition, at home.

In this new context national and international gestures of recognition and reconciliation were made, incited by the increasingly multicultural nations once deeply involved in Atlantic slavery. The Caribbean, Latin America, and certainly the relevant African countries joined in at a slightly later stage, as did the United Nations. UNESCO started its Slave Route Project in the mid-1990s. The United Nations proclaimed 2004, the bicentennial of the Haitian independence, the International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery.

### GHANA AND THE DUTCH SLAVE TRADE

In the Netherlands, a platform of organizations representing the perhaps 300,000 Dutch of African descent (to put this into perspective, less than 2 percent of the Dutch population of around 16 million) was the driving force behind the government's first-ever policy on slavery since its abolition in 1863. In 1999, the government officially expressed its support for the construction of a monument to commemorate slavery. Three years later the national monument to commemorate slavery and its legacies was erected, and the establishment of a research and educational institute, NiNsee, followed (Van Stipriaan 2001, Kardux 2004).

More such symbolic gestures have been made or are in the making. Thus the municipality of Flushing in Zeeland, the Netherlands, which had the most active slaving harbor of the Netherlands, decided to erect its own monument in 2005. Likewise, once the mayor of Amsterdam learned that his residence had been home to a merchant involved in the Atlantic slave trade, he requested that a committee of citizens with mainly Afro-Caribbean roots write an explanatory notice to be attached to the mansion. As incidental surveys indicate, public awareness has increased significantly over the past half decade or so. Yet in wider society, the whole issue of Atlantic slavery continues to be regarded primarily as an Afro-Caribbean concern.<sup>7</sup>

The presence of both Queen Beatrix and the Dutch prime minister at the inauguration of the monument in Amsterdam symbolized the state's willingness

6. In the Jamaican poet, Louise Bennett's mockingly biting phrase, "a colonization in reverse."

7. This slightly pessimistic conclusion derives mainly from my own active involvement – as a white scholar and advisor to Dutch government and politicians – in these issues over the past decade.



to face up to its slavery past. Ghana's ambassador to the Netherlands was also prominently present. By then, Ghana had virtually become a representative of all of Africa. Members of the Ghananian community in the Netherlands were indeed appreciated participants in the debates on the monument.<sup>8</sup>

How does the past connect Ghana and the Netherlands, and how much significance do the various actors attach to the slave trade in the historical association? As for the past connection, Dutch colonial history extends to Africa, the Americas, and Asia. In the first centuries of colonial rule, two companies, the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC) and the Dutch West Indies Company (WIC), represented the Dutch state both in trade and colonial rule. The VOC had Asia and the Cape Colony as its domain, while the WIC focused on West Africa and the Americas.

For a variety of reasons which have as much to do with contemporary domestic policies as with colonial history itself, the Dutch nurture a long tradition of pride for the accomplishments of the VOC, while the long-observed history of the WIC was only recently rediscovered. Whereas the VOC was recently commemorated with pride, the WIC is mainly remembered in a context of remorse precisely because the African slave trade belonged to its core business (Oostindie 2003).

That the VOC was involved in slave trading and slavery to a similar extent as the WIC is not ignored, but it is certainly not a central issue in historiography and much less in public memory. More generally, the slave trade in Asia and Oceania remain underresearched in comparison with the transatlantic trade. This historiographic neglect is probably because the Asian slave trade had relatively less impact than its Atlantic counterpart, but also by the fact that its legacies are not as conspicuous and particularly that it left no significant identifiable diaspora.<sup>9</sup>

In the transatlantic slave trade, the Dutch were a minor but important participant. Of an estimated grand total of 11 million enslaved Africans shipped across the Atlantic, their share was probably half a million, just below 5 percent. This places the Dutch above North America, in the same category as Spain, and far behind France and particularly Portugal/Brazil and Britain.<sup>10</sup> The share of the Dutch slave trade in and around the Gold Coast was greater.

8. Mainly, that is, with the Surinamese Dutch. The Surinamese community (some 325,000 people) has a longer history in the Netherlands and is more extensive than the Antillean community (125,000). Half of the Surinamese Dutch are of African origins, the other of Asian ancestry. Surinamese have been dominant in the debate on the monument, a dominance sometimes provoking irritation with Antilleans.

9. Drescher & Engerman 1998:364. On the early Dutch slave trade in Asia, see Vink 2003 and the extensive literature cited therein.

10. Postma 2003:137. Postma places his revised aggregated Dutch slave exports from Africa, 1600-1803, at 501,409, or 4.6 percent of the estimated total. As Eltis (2001:Table

Even if mainly the slave trade seems to be remembered today, African-European trades extended beyond this. This applies to Dutch trade relations with West Africa as well. The greater value of this trade was in commodities, not in human cargo. The major West African exports to the Netherlands were gold – increasingly not a domestic African product but re-exported from Brazil – followed at a great distance by ivory, while the key import items were textiles, followed by military stores and cowry shells.<sup>11</sup>

Elmina, the Dutch trading post on the Gold Coast in contemporary Ghana, became a linchpin linking Africa with the Americas, and particularly with the Dutch slave colonies in the Caribbean. The first permanent Dutch trading post on the Gold Coast, and indeed in all of Africa, was the fortress Nassau, near Mori, founded in 1612 as an open incursion into the untenable Portuguese monopoly in the region. The first Dutch attempt to conquer the nearby and mighty Portuguese fortress of São Jorge da Mina (Elmina) failed miserably in 1625. The second attempt, initiated in northeastern Brazil, which was taken from the Portuguese in 1630, succeeded in 1637. A series of minor fortresses nearby soon changed flags too. The Dutch were now at the apex of their exploits both in Brazil and Africa, and soon conquered major Portuguese fortresses in contemporary Angola and São Tomé. Securing a steady supply of enslaved Africans for their newly acquired Brazilian plantation colony became a major interest for the WIC. The Dutch captures of both Angola and São Tomé and Brazil, however, would soon turn out to be temporary successes only.

The Dutch West India Company's fragile hold on West Africa thus centered on Elmina, even though the Dutch held a number of minor fortresses in its vicinity.<sup>12</sup> There proved to be no way to keep other European nations from infringing upon the presumed Dutch monopoly. A series of other fortresses in the immediate vicinity were soon held by other Europeans, particularly the British, but also the Danes and others. Elmina itself remained Dutch until it passed into British control in 1872, long after the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, and to the bitter amazement of the local African rulers, who for good reasons thought neither the Dutch nor the British had any right what-

III) indicates, half the imports into the Dutch Caribbean (specifically to Curaçao and St. Eustatius) were immediately re-exported. The proportion of enslaved Africans actually destined for the Dutch Americas proper was therefore only 2.7 percent.

11. Den Heijer (2003:153-4, 157, 159) provides figures for specific shorter periods only. The proportional value of the major WIC exports from the Gold Coast to the Netherlands, 1675-1731 were 86.6 percent for gold and 10.3 percent for ivory. The value of the major WIC imports into West Africa, 1700-23, was 50.6 percent for textiles, 12.2 percent for military stores, and 11.2 percent for cowrie shells.

12. The Dutch East India Company developed Cape Town in contemporary South Africa as its major settlement in Africa.

soever to negotiate a trade of ownership of this *African* property (Doortmont 2002:29-30).

There was by no means an exclusive connection between Elmina or the entire Gold Coast and the Netherlands during the period of the slave trade. First, many other regions of Africa supplied human cargo to the Dutch slave traders. The foremost historian of the Dutch slave trade, Johannes Postma, has demonstrated that the enslaved Africans brought to the Dutch colonies in the Americas hailed from many regions. In the period of the trade monopoly held by the WIC up to the late 1730s, the Slave Coast (contemporary Togo, Benin, and the Western part of Nigeria) and the Angola/"Loango" region (contemporary Congo and Angola) provided 45 and 30 percent of all slaves, respectively. The share of the Gold Coast was nearly 22 percent. In the subsequent period of free trade the share of enslaved Africans shipped from Loango dropped to 35 percent, while the greater part was dispatched via Elmina. Postma indicates, however, that perhaps a majority of those shipped through Elmina did not actually come from the Gold Coast or its immediate hinterlands, but rather from the Windward regions. By then, Elmina had become the last port of call of the Dutch slave trade in all of western Africa (Postma 1990:112-24).

The population of enslaved Africans going to the major Dutch Caribbean plantation colony, Suriname, may have been similarly heterogeneous in ethnicity. Alex van Stipriaan estimates that around 30 percent of all enslaved Africans brought to Suriname were shipped from Elmina. Though known collectively as Kromanti, they were probably of more diverse ethnic origins. Another 30 percent were shipped to Suriname from Loango, 25 percent from the Ivory Coast and the Grain Coast (Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast), and 15 percent from the region once known as the Slave Coast (Van Stipriaan 2000:13).

A combination of economic, political, and military factors may explain the changing pattern of slave supplies. Like all other European slave traders, the Dutch bought Africans wherever they could and at the lowest possible price. Access to specific trading posts in Africa was partly a question of the military balance of power. The price level was another major factor, partly dependent on the competition of other buyers, partly on the conditions at the supplying end. Thus, the demise of the Slave Coast in the early eighteenth century was attributed by a Dutch merchant to the increasing supply at the Gold Coast created by political instability in the latter area. He explained that the expansion of the Ashante in the interior had had a negative effect on the production and supply of gold, but had at the same time provoked a substantial rise in the number of prisoners of war offered for sale as slaves to the Dutch (Den Heijer 2003:160, 164).

The Gold Coast supplied enslaved Africans to other European nations as well. The Portuguese had footholds elsewhere in West Africa and soon

also negotiated their way back into the immediate region of Elmina. Their share in all of the slave trade from West Africa – called the Costa da Mina by the Portuguese – was massive, but the proportion traded from the Gold Coast specifically is difficult to determine. Apart from temporary incursions by the Swedish and the Brandenburgers, the French and, to a lesser extent, the Danish were consistently active on the Gold Coast too. Nevertheless, the British were by far the most important slave traders in this particular part of West Africa.<sup>13</sup>

#### ELMINA AS A *LIEU DE MÉMOIRE* IN GHANAIAAN-DUTCH RELATIONS

The direct historical links between Ghana and the Netherlands through the “odious commerce” are indisputable, and it is not my intention to diminish Elmina’s present role as a symbol of these long and shameful years of early Dutch expansion. Nonetheless Dutch involvement in the Atlantic slave trade extended far beyond contemporary Ghana and, conversely, the Gold Coast’s commercial relations were neither limited to slave trading nor to Dutch merchants and officials.

In recent scholarly literature on the bilateral relations, the embeddedness of the slave trade in a wider array of commercial relations is emphasized. A good example of this approach is the edited book published on the occasion of the tercentennial of Ghanaian-Dutch relations, fixed somewhat arbitrarily in 2001-2002. Most contributors to the book, *Merchants, Missionaries and Migrants: 300 Years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations* (Van Kessel 2002), go out of their way to emphasize that the slave trade was a shameful chapter in this past, but certainly not the only chapter in the bilateral relations. Interestingly, throughout the book, both Ghanaian and Dutch authors stress that traders on both sides acted on equal footing: there was no way for the Dutch to dictate the supplying end of the market, whether in slaves, gold or other “goods” (Van Kessel 2002).

The obvious fact that the Dutch Atlantic slave trade extended far beyond the coastal regions of contemporary Ghana seems lost to all but a handful of scholars. In public debates and government statements in the Netherlands on the slavery issue, one observes a tendency to conflate all of Africa into Ghana, or even Elmina. This historical inaccuracy is easily explained. We dearly need tangible legacies of the past – and if ever there was one monumental *lieu de mémoire* of the Dutch slave trade, it is obviously Elmina with its “Gate of No Return.”

13. Curtin 1969:122, 128-9, 150, 170, 200, 207-8, 210-13, 221, 223-7; Thomas 1997:346-9.

Yet there is an additional, truly postcolonial factor at work here. Over the past decades, a small but thriving Ghanaian community has established itself in the Netherlands. This community officially numbers around 15,000 today, though unofficially it counts many more. Over half of them live in Amsterdam, which, because of its large Caribbean community, is also the heart of the slavery debate. Moreover, it is there that the national monument in commemoration of Atlantic slavery stands. Not surprisingly Ghanaians already participating in local politics and community work also became involved in the slavery debate as almost the only Africans, whence the rediscovery of the “colonial” links which had nothing to do with their initial decision to move to the Netherlands. This pragmatic rediscovery of historical links is a perfect illustration of how the context in which the transatlantic slave trade was rediscovered in Europe primarily reflects contemporary domestic concerns and conditions.

In the Dutch public debate, full attention is being paid to the Dutch role in the slave trade on the demand side, whereas the African role on the supply side is rarely touched upon. The neglect of the African role is not particularly surprising. The debate began chiefly as a means to break the silence surrounding transatlantic slavery, which for so long veiled this past and which was offensive and grievous to the descendants of enslaved Africans now living in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Any “white man/woman” pointing to joint responsibilities, whether evenly borne or not, is likely to be considered as openly evading the question of metropolitan responsibility. Moreover there is little inclination to embarrass the Ghanaian community with questions and accusations regarding their forefathers’ possible involvement in the selling off of the ancestors of the contemporary Caribbean communities in the Netherlands. It seems that Dutch Caribbean protagonists in the debate tend to shy away from the subject in order not to create internal dissension. Certainly, Dutch authorities are in no position to raise the point of African complicity.

Councillor Hannah Belliot with the Amsterdam town council, *did* raise this delicate issue in public – significantly, she is of Surinamese descent. In 2002, on the occasion of the tercentennial, Ashante King Otumfo Osei Tutu II visited the Netherlands. The invitation was extended by the Dutch government. At a reception, Mrs. Belliot refused to shake hands with the king, demanding in vain apologies for the Ashante involvement in the slave trade instead.<sup>14</sup> History repeated itself, for three decades ago, a select group of Maroon chiefs from the interior of Suriname traveled to Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria, and likewise – though more politely – demanded explanations from the African chiefs they met there for the selling of their forebears. They did not receive a satisfying answer either (De Groot 1974:18-9, 22, 32-36).

14. Documented in the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, June 20, 2002.

In diplomatic relations, Accra has made it clear that the past linkages through the slave trade should not present a major issue on the bilateral agenda, thus sparing the Dutch government further embarrassment, but also itself – after all, the issue is also a potentially divisive one in Ghana’s contemporary multiethnic society. Thus the remorse over the slave trade expressed by the Dutch crown prince on his 2002 visit to Ghana was prompted less by Ghanaian pressure than by Dutch domestic concerns. The prince’s declaration, while a symbolic gesture of importance, evaded an outright apology and thereby the matter of reparations: “We look back with remorse to that dark age of human relations. We pay tribute to the victims of this inhuman trade.”<sup>15</sup>

#### ACCURACY, APOLOGIES, AND ACCUSATIONS

The way Ghana is included in what for all practical purposes is mainly a Dutch debate – including the Dutch of Surinamese or Antillean descent, and now the Dutch Ghanaian community too – points to the wider question of scholarly accuracy in a politicized context. After all, the slavery debate as it has emerged in Western countries such as the Netherlands advocates a breaking of the silences of previous generations yet risks to substitute new half-truths and silences for old ones.

Academic debates should not shy away from delicate issues. But the core business of scholarship, even of scholarship of such horrifying episodes in world history as the transatlantic slave trade, is analysis and accuracy, not apologies or accusations. The prime concern of scholars of slavery in the Atlantic world includes both the need to work toward a balanced assessment of the past and its presumed contemporary legacies and to report these findings to a wider audience. Whatever the scholarly community relays should be based on sound research; it should not simply tell the interested public what it prefers to hear. There is therefore an academic responsibility not to accept a divergence between the scholarly debate and the politicized public discourse. Much is lost when the pasts and legacies the two circuits evoke correspond to entirely separate realities.<sup>16</sup>

15. Visit of April 15, 2002 to Elmina. *NRC Handelsblad*, April 16 and 18, 2002. *De Volkskrant*, April 18, 2002.

16. The case against the emergence of two discursive “circuits” discussing the slave trade and its legacies is made emphatically by Pieter Emmer in the postscript to the reprint of his both authoritative and controversial monograph on the Dutch slave trade (Emmer 2003:241-71). I agree on this with Emmer, even if unfortunately his own contribution to the bridging of this divide is at times unduly polemical and therefore counterproductive.

The so-called numbers game may illustrate this point. In the past decades a good deal of scholarly time and effort has been spent on assessing the total volume of the Atlantic slave trade, the regions of origin, destinations, gender ratios, mortality rates, and so on. As new archival records were combed and new methodologies and immense quantitative data sets were developed, the reliability of the scholarly evidence has increased.<sup>17</sup> Even if disagreements over figures continue and the numbers game “is likely to remain a significant historical industry for some time to come” (Eltis & Richardson 1997:2), there is a fair degree of consensus. The most widely accepted scholarly calculations tend to converge and have not been significantly revised since Philip Curtin (1969:268) estimated that the total of enslaved Africans that actually landed in the Americas was around 9.5 million. Recent estimates still suggest there were around 11 million embarkations and around 9.5 million landings (Eltis & Richardson 1997:2; Drescher & Engerman 1998:372; Eltis 2001, Table 1). Arguments for an upward revision by long-time participants in the numbers game, such as Joseph Inikori and Paul Lovejoy, yield only moderate discrepancies: around 10.2 million arrivals (Lovejoy) and 12.7 million departures (Inikori), a revision of around 7 to 15 percent, respectively (Eltis 2001).

On the basis of such estimates, the total number of Africans enslaved in the interior of the continent with the objective of being transported to the Americas is often put at 20 million. There is neither absolute certainty nor consensus, and such figures are used in much of the scholarly community with due prudence. In contrast, the numbers brought up in public debates often exceed this amount by a wide margin. Thus one finds references to “more than three hundred million men and women ... forcefully uprooted and dreadfully transported from their Motherland” in an official brochure, published in 2004 by the Ghanaian government.<sup>18</sup> The president of the Dutch platform urging for a monument in commemoration of slavery advanced a number of 60 million enslaved Africans, again, not an estimate corroborated by scholarly analysis.<sup>19</sup> Some of these divergent estimates are a result of poor acquaintance with recent scholarship. Others are prompted

17. Particularly the one compiled at the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute of Harvard University (Eltis *et al.* 1999).

18. Embau Moheni 2004:16. The prominent Ghanaian historian, Kwesi J. Anquandah, president of the Ghana Chapter of the UNESCO Slave Route Project, suggests a more cautious figure, though one that clearly exceeds conventional calculations: some 7 million Africans exported from the Gold Coast alone. Quoted in a magazine published by the Ministry of Tourism and Modernisation of the Capital City: *Ghana: A Different Africa*, [2004] p. 13.

19. Barryl Biekman, quoted in an article “De zwarte holocaust,” *De Groene Amsterdammer*, May 13, 2000.

by a deep mistrust of “white” scholarship. The depiction of a wide range of sensitive issues may be similarly colored, amongst them being the participation of Africans on the supply side, the profitability and economic significance of the slave trade for the three continents involved, the background to abolition and its widely divergent timings, the connection between the slave trade and racism then as now, the issue of trauma borne in the African diaspora and its consequences in contemporary societies, the relevance of religion to systems of slavery (Christianity versus Islam), and so on.

The terminology at a recent conference in Accra on the slave trade betrays the effect of emotions on scholarship.<sup>20</sup> Several participants at the conference fiercely objected to a broad use of the very term “slave trade.” Any references to contemporary problems such as the abduction of children in Africa – a major issue addressed at the conference by a representative of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights – under the heading of “slave trade” were deemed incorrect, if not irresponsible. The argument is straightforward: “Nothing compares to the atrocities of the Atlantic slave trade.”

While any attempt at trivialization is out of place, one may well question the affirmation that “nothing compares.” There is a thin line here between scholarship, politics, rage, and hypocrisy. At the Accra conference, the concepts of “slave trade” and “slavery” were explicitly narrowed to refer to the Atlantic variant while paradoxically the term “Holocaust” was expanded to include the Atlantic slave trade. Indeed, the once uniquely U.S. locution “Black Holocaust” has gradually acquired popularity all over the “Black Atlantic.”<sup>21</sup>

There is an evident political rationale behind the shifts in connotation that “slave trade” and “Holocaust” undergo, which one may or may not condone, but intellectually this maneuver is not convincing. Particularly in the Western world, there appears to be a willingness to commemorate, to erect symbols of remembrance, to record and canonize stories of repression, victory, and redemption. Whereas no nation is eager to dwell on its own past sins, communities with a history of being oppressed are not inclined to remember their own histories with detachment. Inevitably, at times unsettling debates emerge about who suffered most, and jealousy is directed at those who have been most successful in finding recognition

20. Conference on “The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Landmarks, Legacies and Expectations,” Accra, Ghana. Personal observations during the conference and a subsequent visit to Elmina and other fortresses.

21. Google offers over 1.2 million entries for “Black Holocaust.” A Dutch-language Google search for *zwarte holocaust* results in 11,400 entries. The latter search also leads to a white racist web group that both ridicules Dutch of African origins and downplays or denies the Jewish Holocaust (web search March 15, 2005).



and compensation for past suffering. Often the emphasis on victimhood is married to the expectation of reparations.<sup>22</sup>

The ways in which victimhood and agency are treated in public debates are also indicative of the particular slant the depiction of the Atlantic slave trade gets: mainly as a history of European colonial powers abusing Africans and the continent of Africa, and hence as a tale of simple bipolar racism. While scholarship has moved beyond that crude schematization, the emergence of the Atlantic slave trade as an issue embraced in the three continents involved and by international institutions such as UNESCO seems to have dictated a narrowing of the issue again to the racial-cum-colonial issue.

As Singleton (1999:157) remarks, many Ghanaians “feel that they have no reason to apologize” for their ancestors’ involvement in the slave trade. At the Accra conference participants did not shy away from discussing African agency in the trade. Inevitably, with such openness the debate assumes a potentially divisive dynamic not only between the African diaspora and Africans, but equally within African countries such as Ghana, with its different ethnic groups brought together in one in what became the Republic of Ghana only long after the abolition of the slave trade. Some of these ethnic groups once enslaved others, an embarrassing truth known to all, yet hard to discuss – yet another warning against debating the Atlantic slave trade from a purely moralistic perspective.

#### HERITAGE TOURISM

Even if there are serious philosophical objections to the very idea of nations repenting or demanding apologies for past wrongs (Trouillot 2000) few would question the relevance of commemorating historical atrocities. But there is no obvious way to even begin to respectfully remember any event of mass suffering, whether it be the Atlantic slave trade, the Holocaust and the Gulag, Cambodia’s killing fields, or the recent genocide in Rwanda. Things become even more complicated once the remembrance of past horrors becomes part of heritage tourism, which is a money-making business, after all.

Silencing the past of Atlantic slavery is no longer an option. The way to break past silences is not evident, and whatever choices are made in representing Atlantic slavery in museums are bound to stir controversy (e.g.,

22. See Buruma 1995; in the context of the Dutch debate on slavery, see Oostindie 1999. See also Ian Buruma’s essay “The Joys and Perils of Victimhood,” *New York Review of Books*, April 8, 1999 and Tony Judt, “A la Recherche du Temps Perdu,” *New York Review of Books*, December 3, 1998.

Vaswani 2001, Havisser 2002). Whatever initiatives are undertaken to give this past its proper place in public memory, the “dangers of banalization and tokenism” (Price 2001b:62) are always clear and present.

Ghana, too, supported by USAID, UNESCO, the Danish and Dutch governments, and others, is now actively engaged in developing its own heritage tourism. Inevitably the slave trade is at the core of this developing tourism and is given a more privileged position probably than local Ghanaians would like it to be (e.g., Bruner 1996, Singleton 1999, Hartman 2002). Here too, contemporary concerns and contingencies tend to interfere with historical realities. African Americans were the first to develop interest, on a larger scale, in visiting the “Homeland.” Today, this interest is still heavily concentrated in the English-speaking African diaspora. This Anglophone preponderance in turn has stimulated a disproportional, if not exclusive, interest in English-speaking Africa, and particularly in Ghana. Ironically, “Africa” is narrowed to connote the present more than the past centuries.

There are some speculative explanations for why primarily Anglophones show interest in Africa, and English-language Africa at that. First, most Homeland visitors hail from the English-speaking African diaspora in part simply because of their relative prosperity in comparison to most of the African diaspora. Furthermore, it is precisely in the United States that African Americans have felt more excluded from the domestic mainstream than anywhere else in the African diaspora. It may be that they seek a sense of belonging in an African Homeland which they do not have in their physical home. The British West Indies meanwhile have a long-standing migratory and ideological interaction with the African American community. In contrast, the other relatively affluent segments of the diaspora are increasingly more integrated in their former metropolitan culture; this applies particularly to the French Caribbean departments. If there is an African *lieu de mémoire* of any significance to the Caribbean French, it is rather the island of Gorée, part of Francophone Senegal and thus of the former French colonial world.<sup>23</sup>

That the contemporary United States and Anglophone Caribbean orient themselves toward African states where English is widely spoken is not surprising, even if this does not necessarily reflect the origins of their ancestors.<sup>24</sup> But why particularly Ghana? Perhaps the long-standing relations between African American and West Indian intellectuals with Kwame Nkrumah has set a lasting precedent. In addition, of the relevant

23. Email communication, Kenneth Bilby, March 28, 2005.

24. On Google, linking “slavery and heritage tourism” to Ghana yields 7,360 results. Nigeria scores even higher (9,830), but of course this is a much larger and more populous state. Non-Anglophone states such as Angola (4,600), Senegal (4,700), Benin (852), and Togo (723) all yield fewer results (web search March 15, 2005).

"Anglophone" African countries, Ghana is economically and politically the most stable and hence most attractive destination, and, of course, it possesses the largest number of fortresses from the period of the Atlantic slave trade.

Whatever the historical accuracies or distortions, Ghana in return has started to present itself as "the Black Star of Africa and the gateway to the Homeland." As the country's minister of tourism explains, "we hope to give tourists, especially those of African descent in the Diaspora, a real feel of the experience of their ancestors as they went through the torturous moments of being captured, trekked through the wild African forest, crossing rivers and being sold to slave dealers." Ghana hopes that in 2007, the fiftieth year of the country's independence and the two hundredth anniversary of the British abolition of the slave trade, "our brothers and sisters whose ancestors were forcibly taken away from us [will] return to the Homeland, at least for a pilgrimage and to reconnect with their roots." The Republic has already institutionalized a national "Emancipation Day." The choice for the first of August is illustrative of the rather narrowly defined symbolism of the rediscovered transatlantic linkages. This particular day is, of course, the day of the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, a date without any particular prior meaning to Ghana at all (Obetsebi-Lampitey 2004:7).

Ghana, a country struggling to diversify its economy, is thus profiting from its preferred relations with the African diaspora in its development of heritage tourism. Along the Atlantic coastline, fortresses once in use as centers of the slave trade are now being restored to attract tourists, some of whom are descendants of the enslaved Africans shipped from these very places – or willing to believe so for lack of proper documentation. Several things strike the visitor. The guides at the fortresses, while they avoid moralizing, do produce their own silences: no mention here of the African supply side.<sup>25</sup> One wonders what the forts thus tell the great majority of visitors, who are actually Ghanaians. And one wonders where reconciliation, the buzzword at the Accra conference, plays a role.

The development of this heritage tourism implies commoditization and standardization. Thus in various fortresses one observes the same routing and even the same apparently standardized and centrally produced signs ("Female Slave Dungeon," "Door of No Return," etc.). All fortresses are apparently allotted a "Door of No Return," irrespectively of the architectural accuracy of its location within the fortress and indeed of the fact that probably the majority of the enslaved Africans never set foot in the fortress but were directly transported to and from the Atlantic beach. Tourist facilities – restaurants, souvenir shops – are added within or immediately next to the forts. Inevitably, local

25. The guides probably adjust their explanations to suit the "ethnic" composition of the groups of visitors taking a tour (Hartman 2002:768-69).

youth hang about, imposing conversation, friendship, and more tangible commodities on the visitors. For them, it seems to matter little whether the *obroni* (originally “whites,” today “foreigners,” generally) are black or white (Bruner 1996:295; Hartman 2002:766). In fact, to keep the locals from harassing tourists of whatever color, signs indicate that only tourists are allowed to enter Elmina castle (Bruner 1996:298, Singleton 1999:158).

Small wonder, then, that some African diaspora visitors have been outraged by the commercialization of their ancestors’ suffering. The restoration of the fortresses was denounced in vain as “whitewashing” and “cleansing” of the tragic past (Bruner 1996:291; Singleton 1999:157). Less assertive reactions also reflect the uneasiness with the way the painful past is presented and new transatlantic solidarities are offered. After a visit to Elmina castle, Saidiya Hartman (2002:768) remarks that the idea expressed by the guided tour (“You are back!”) makes her ill at ease. “The most disturbing aspect of these re-enactments is the suggestion that the rupture of the Middle Passage is neither irreparable nor irrevocable, but bridged by the tourist who acts as the vessel for the ancestor. In short, the captive finds his redemption in the tourist.”

Can the Ghanaian government really do much better, short of letting the fortresses fall into ruin? Whatever compromises are made and whatever delicacy is observed by museum curators and guides, the deep contrasts are not likely to disappear. The parallel between the endemic mismatch between “European” and African diaspora visions and feelings regarding the slave trade is obvious. To complicate things in the case of Ghana, the very European nations – the Danish and particularly the Dutch – formerly involved in slave trading are now financially assisting the Ghanaian government in its policy of developing this heritage tourism.

The irony is obvious: there would have been no particular reason for Ghana to maintain any specific relationship with either the Netherlands or its former Caribbean colonies, if not for the Ghanaian community in the Netherlands and because Ghana is one of the countries selected by the Dutch government for preferential development aid. The preservation of cultural heritage is one among many development projects now funded by the Dutch, and so it is that this former slave-trading state is now co-financing the upkeep Elmina, its own erstwhile main slave-trading fortress.

While the whole endeavor may have a wry flavor to it, Elmina is now firmly fixed as the ultimate *lieu de mémoire* for the Dutch slave trade. Not only did the crown prince express his remorse for Dutch slave trading at Elmina, but in several recent Dutch television documentaries on the trade, Elmina figures prominently. Heritage tourism developed for the African diaspora in the Netherlands or its former Caribbean colonies is almost matter-of-factly directed to Ghana, not to any other site in Africa.

Historical accuracy is not the major concern behind this heritage tourism, but rather the longing to connect to a tangible Homeland – with the Afro-Caribbean communities in the Netherlands taking the lead, whether because of their relative prosperity, their permanent exposure to a European society in which they are a cultural minority, or a combination of the two. Incidentally, in the recent upsurge of genealogical websites offering databases on manumission, of the emancipation registers, and so on one observes the predominance and political clout of the diaspora now in the Netherlands. How this apparent longing to connect back to ancestors once toiling under slavery relates to contemporary identity issues is a matter of debate. Nonetheless, it is the metropolitan state which, through its national archives, facilitates this roots-searching.<sup>26</sup>

### CONCLUSION

In the general debate on slavery and its legacies, there are also many issues of lesser sensitivity that deserve serious reflection, simply because they will help us understand the rich variety of cultures developed in the diaspora. For example, any serious study of African American culture should begin by establishing the various origins, and thus cultures, of enslaved Africans that influenced the New World creolization processes.

Accuracy has been under-appreciated in understanding the past and the present alike. Patrick Manning (2003) points out “an ironic blind spot of Africa-diaspora studies: the African continent itself is presented too often in oversimplified terms of an undifferentiated Homeland.” Beyond academia, such oversimplifications are omnipresent. Here again, the conflation of Africa and Ghana in the discussion of slavery in the Dutch orbit and beyond is not particularly helpful.<sup>27</sup>

The challenge of somehow bridging scholarly concerns and African identity issues remains, and there are no easy answers or clear-cut divisions. Some remarks regarding a recently started program on “The Atlantic World and the Dutch, 1500-2000” may illustrate this point. In this project an attempt is made both to identify the major landmarks, archival records, and library resources rooted in the centuries of Dutch exploits in Africa and the Americas and to establish what research initiatives and priorities presently exist. The project is based and financed in the Netherlands, yet by definition attempts to link up with archives, libraries, and scholars

26. For Suriname see <[www.nationaalarchief.nl/vrij-in-suriname](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/vrij-in-suriname)>; for the Antilles <[www.nationaalarchief.nl/vrij-van-slavernij](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/vrij-van-slavernij)>. A similar project has been developed for the Surinamese of Asian descent: <[www.nationaalarchief.nl/suriname](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/suriname)>.

27. Manning 2003:488. On creolization with particular reference to Africa and Suriname, see Van Stipriaan 2000; Price 2001a.

in all countries involved.<sup>28</sup> Ghana is among these; so are Angola, Aruba, Brazil, Ghana, Guyana, the Netherlands Antilles, Suriname, and the United States.<sup>29</sup>

The issue of the Atlantic slave trade is obviously a preponderant one in the project, at least for the first centuries of the “Dutch Atlantic.” Yet the extent to which representatives of the various countries involved define the slave trade and slavery as the defining characteristics of early Dutch expansion in the Atlantic realm differs considerably. As a consequence there is, next to the straightforward accusatory Caribbean attitude and its apologetic metropolitan complement, the very ambivalent African attitude. Moreover, there is the perspective from New Amsterdam, one in which the African dimension of early Dutch settlement was recently rediscovered, but certainly not as a defining characteristic (e.g., Jacobs 1999, Shorto 2004). And finally, there is the view from the pioneering Dutch settlements in the Americas, in Brazil. Here, the naïve observer is amazed by the uncritical tone and even sheer exaltation characterizing many contemporary Brazilian renderings of Dutch colonialism.<sup>30</sup>

These widely divergent perspectives somehow relate to the same historical phenomenon. Accounting for these divergences is in itself a worthy subject for scholarly analysis. And, to conclude on a deliberately old-fashioned positivistic note, no serious explanations are likely to come forward without getting some historical facts right first.

28. The project is based at the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies ([www.kitlv.nl](http://www.kitlv.nl)) in Leiden and is supported by the Amsterdam Municipal Archives, the Dutch National Archives, the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Leiden University, the National Institute for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy (Ninsee), and the National Library of the Netherlands.

29. Territories where Dutch exploits were more transitory, like for instance Gorée, São Tomé, and Tobago are included.

30. For example, Herkenhoff 1999, Montes, Mota Menezes & Galindo 2004. Rosa Ribeiro (2004) offers a provocative analysis of the Brazilian interpretation of “Dutch Brazil” (1630-54); see also Pijning (2002).

## REFERENCES

- BRUNER, EDWARD M., 1996. Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora. *American Anthropologist* 98:290-304.
- BURUMA, IAN, 1995. *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan*. London: Meridian.
- CURTIN, PHILIP D., 1969. *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- DOORTMONT, MICHEL R., 2002. An Overview of Dutch Relations with the Gold Coast in the Light of David van Nyendael's Mission to Ashanti in 1701-1702. In Ineke van Kessel (ed.), *Merchants, Missionaries and Migrants: 300 Years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers/Accra, Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publishers, pp. 19-32.
- DRESCHER, SEYMOUR & STANLEY L. ENGERMAN (eds.), 1998. *A Historical Guide to World Slavery*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- EICHSTEDT, JENNIFER L. & STEPHEN SMALL, 2002. *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- ELTIS, DAVID, 2001. The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment. *The William and Mary Quarterly* 58:17-46.
- & DAVID RICHARDSON, 1997. The "Numbers Game" and Routes to Slavery. *Abolition & Slavery* 18(1):1-15.
- et al. (eds.), 1999. *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- EMMER, P.C., 2003. *De Nederlandse slavenhandel 1500-1850*. Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers. [Orig. 2000.]
- EYERMAN, RON, 2001. *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GROOT, SILVIA W. DE, 1974. *Surinaamse granmans in Afrika: Vier groot-opperhoofden bezoeken het land van hun voorouders*. Utrecht, the Netherlands: Het Spectrum.
- HARTMAN, SAIDIYA, 2002. The Time of Slavery. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101:757-77.
- HAVISER, JAY B., 2002. Welcome to Slavery Land. *Kristòf* 12:2-9.
- HEIJER, HENK DEN, 2003. The West Africa Trade of the Dutch West India Company, 1674-1740. In Johannes Postma & Victor Enthoven (eds.), *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585-1817*. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, pp. 139-69.

HERKENHOFF, PAULO (ed.), 1999. *Brazil and the Dutch 1630-1654*. Rio de Janeiro: Sextante Artes.

JACOBS, JAAP, 1999. *Een zegenrijk gewest: Nieuw-Nederland in de zeventiende eeuw*. Amsterdam: Prometheus-Bert Bakker.

KARDUX, JOHANNA C., 2004. Monuments of the Black Atlantic: Slavery Memorials in the United States and the Netherlands. In Heike Raphael-Hernandez (ed.), *Blackening Europe: The African American Presence*. New York: Routledge, pp. 87-105.

KESSEL, INEKE VAN (ed.), 2002. *Merchants, Missionaries & Migrants: 300 Years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers/Accra, Ghana: Sub-Saharan Publishers.

MANNING, PATRICK, 2003. Africa and the African Diaspora: New Directions of Study. *Journal of African History* 44:487-506.

MOHENI, EMBAU, 2004. Importance of Emancipation Day. In *Emancipation Day: Celebration in Ghana: Emancipation: Our Heritage, Our Strength*. Accra, Ghana: Ministry of Tourism and Modernisation of the Capital City, pp. 16-17.

MONTES, MARIA LUCIA, JOSÉ LUIZ MOTA MENEZES & MARCUS GALINDO, 2004. *Eu, Maurício: Os espelhos de Nassau*. Recife: Instituto Cultural Bandepe.

OBETSEBI-LAMPTEY, J.O., 2004. Emancipation Day in Ghana. *Emancipation Day: Celebration in Ghana: Emancipation: Our Heritage, Our Strength*. Accra, Ghana: Ministry of Tourism and Modernisation of the Capital City, pp. 4-7.

OOSTINDIE, GERT, 1999. Overpeinzingen bij een monument. In Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Het verleden onder ogen: Herdenking van de slavernij*. Amsterdam: Arena/The Hague, the Netherlands: Prins Claus Fonds voor Cultuur en Ontwikkeling, pp. 103-12.

—, 2003. Squaring the Circle: Commemorating the VOC after 400 Years. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 159:135-61.

— (ed.), 2001. *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Kingston: Ian Randle/The Hague: Prince Claus Fund.

PIJNING, ERNST, 2002. Paradise Regained: Historiography on the Dutch Occupation of Northeastern Brazil, 1630-1654. *Itinerario* 26(2):120-6.

POSTMA, JOHANNES MENNE, 1990. *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—, 2003. A Reassessment of the Dutch Atlantic Slave Trade. In Johannes Postma & Victor Enthoven (eds.), *Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585-1817*. Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, pp. 115-38.

PRICE, RICHARD, 2001a. The Miracle of Creolization: A Retrospective. *New West Indian Guide* 75:35-64.

—, 2001b. Monuments and Silent Screaming: A View from Martinique. In Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa,*



*the Americas and Europe*. Kingston: Ian Randle/The Hague, the Netherlands: Prince Claus Fund, pp. 58-62.

ROSA RIBEIRO, FERNANDO, 2004. Miscegenation and Mestizos: Portuguese Colonialism and Luso-Brazilian Imaginings of the Dutch Colonial Other. In Siegfried Huigen & Jean Kommers (eds.), *Interpretations of Colonial Representations: Reflections on Alterity, Colonial History, and Intercultural Contact*. Saarbrücken, Germany: Verlag für Entwicklungspolitik, pp. 55-79.

SEGAL, RONALD, 2001. *Islam's Black Slaves: The Other Black Diaspora*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

SHORTO, RUSSELL, 2004. *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony that Shaped America*. New York: Doubleday.

SINGLETON, THERESA A., 1999. The Slave Trade Remembered on the Former Gold and Slave Coasts. *Slavery and Abolition* 20(1):150-69.

STIPRIAAN, ALEX VAN, 2000. *Creoliseren: Vragen van een basketbalplein, antwoorden van een watergodin*. Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam.

—, 2001. The Long Road to a Monument. In Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Kingston: Ian Randle/The Hague, the Netherlands: Prince Claus Fund, pp. 118-22.

THOMAS, HUGH, 1997. *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1440-1870*. London: Picador.

TROUILLOT, MICHEL-ROLPH, 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press.

—, 2000. Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 2(2):171-86.

VASWANI, RATAN, 2001. A Respectable Trade. In Gert Oostindie (ed.), *Facing Up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*. Kingston: Ian Randle/The Hague, the Netherlands: Prince Claus Fund, pp. 138-43.

VINK, MARKUS, 2003. "The World's Oldest Trade": Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century. *Journal of World History* 14:131-76.

GERT OOSTINDIE

KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies

P.O. Box 9515

2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands

<oostindie@kitlv.nl>



JOHN P. HOMIAK

UNDERSTANDING A MODERN ANTIQUE:  
CHALLENGES TO REPRESENTING RASTAFARI IN  
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

*Reggae, Rastafari, and the Rhetoric of Social Control.* STEPHEN A. KING, with contributions by BARRY T. BAYS III & P. RENÉE FOSTER. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2002. vii +173 pp. (Cloth US\$ 40.00).

*The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism.* HÉLÈNE LEE. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2003. vii +306 pp. (Cloth US\$ 26.95).

Drawing increasingly upon digital technologies and the internet to assert a sense of community even as they cultivate an austere biblical persona, adherents of Rastafari can be thought of as simultaneously modern and antique. Their claim to antiquity is grounded in a collectively professed African-Ethiopian identity that has not only resisted the ravages of enslavement, colonialism, and European cultural domination but is seen to transcend local differences of culture and language. Theirs is a way of life organized around theocratic principles that begin with a recognition of the divine in all peoples and as the basis of all human agency. Rastafari assert the universal relevance of these principles to the conditions of modernity even as they persistently claim social justice on behalf of all peoples of African descent exploited by colonialism and the prevailing global capitalist-imperialist system. Based on these general themes, the Rastafari movement has come to represent a large-scale cultural phenomenon that has long since burst the chains of its colonial containment in Jamaica. From the late 1960s onward it has spread throughout the Caribbean and the Central and South American rimland to the major metropolises of North America and Europe as well as to many sites on the African continent.

From this brief, one can perhaps appreciate that the cultural identity known as “Rastafari” (along with its associated practices and movement goals) gives rise to many potentially unstable points of identification. Moreover, with its

geographic reach and diversity, the movement promotes a complex positioning of subjects in relation to changing sociopolitical circumstances that may be at once local and global. However, despite the explosion of literature on Rastafari over the past decade or so, there is little published work that orients scholars or potential researchers to the ideological and organizational diversity that co-exists within the contemporary movement. This is significant because Rastafari principles typically exist within a state of dynamic tension. The ubiquitous Rastafari calls for universal “peace-and-love” and their contending exclusivist demands for “truth-and-rights” in the service of social justice for blacks is but the most notable example. The actual workings of these principles in shaping consensual communities of practitioners no doubt has important implications for understanding how the movement has developed (in Jamaica or elsewhere), and how Rastafari identity is shaped, transformed, and reproduced anew in specific sociopolitical contexts. This, in turn, also raises the issue as to what now constitutes a reasonable geographical or temporal frame of analysis for exploring certain aspects of Rastafari as a contemporary socioreligious movement. In her analysis of the role that symbolic ambiguities have played in the spread of the movement, Carole Yawney (1994:75-83), a long-time ethnographer of Rastafari, is to my knowledge one of the few scholars to offer systematic insights into these processes and issues.

One of the problems with the expanding literature on the movement is, of course, that so little of it is based on actual ethnography – or better, multi-sited ethnography, as is increasingly called for given the transnational reality of the movement. This is perhaps understandable given that many researchers are drawn in by what they take to be the public face of Rastafari, reggae music. This has given rise to a number of popular works that approach the culture of Rastafari largely as a media phenomenon carried forth on a wave of enthusiasm for the music as it is heard in concerts, broadcasts, and the dissemination of records and CDs (Weber 1992, O’Brien Chang & Chen 1998, Roskind 2001). This view poses multiple problems. It obscures both the depth of commitment that characterizes practitioners of Rastafari in communities throughout the Black Atlantic and the complex relationship that exists between the practitioners of the movement’s theocratic principles and the artists who disseminate its popular musical culture. In addition, it tends to obscure the deep and still largely unexplored history of Rastafari, a movement that was birthed by harmonizing discourses (e.g., Ethiopianism and pan-Africanism) and international events (e.g., the defeat of the Italians at Adwa in 1896 and the Italian-Ethiopian war, 1935-41) that resonated across the African world.

Two recent books, Stephen King’s *Reggae, Rastafari, and the Rhetoric of Social Control* and Hélène Lee’s *The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism*, warrant consideration in terms of a number of the points outlined above. The fact that King is an academic trained within

the field of speech communications and that Lee is a widely traveled French music journalist should tell us something about the fascination that Rastafari continues to command as a contemporary cultural phenomenon. Both authors came initially to their respective projects via an interest in the musical form and message of reggae-Rastafari as a popular culture. They share a general interest in understanding how Rastafari has morphed through several phases of development in order to understand how this improbable “cult” has become an international movement. If only in relation to these concerns it is useful to consider what their works contribute to the expanding field of “Rasta studies.”

How have the protest anthems of the classic era of reggae been transformed into support for Jamaica’s tourist industry? Stephen King tackles such general questions of co-optation in his monograph – a revision of his dissertation that at times suffers from an overly academic presentation, particularly when he attempts to fit data to the categories of his particular social movement theory. The study attempts to “comprehensively trace how Jamaica’s protest music has changed both lyrically and musically over a twenty-one year period, and how the Jamaican government has attempted to silence or co-opt these voices of protest” (p. xxiii). King concludes with a look at how Rastafari claims for social justice in reggae have been co-opted first in the service of the island’s emergent nationalism and then to assist Jamaican tourism.

King locates the roots of reggae in ska (1959-65) and rocksteady (1966-67), the two musical forms that preceded it. It was ska, a music that blended *mento*, the indigenous Jamaican version of calypso, with American jazz and rhythm and blues, that reflected the optimistic mood of the country during the run-up to Jamaican independence. As economic conditions worsened for the majority of Jamaica’s blacks during the mid-1960s, the more aggressive lyrics of rocksteady gave voice to the frustrations and alienation of the island’s under- and unemployed ghetto dwellers. And then there was the advent of reggae in the late 1960s and through the 1970s, the period that is remembered as the high-water mark of Rastafari influence on an emergent Jamaican nationalism. Reggae, of course, began as a Rasta-inspired music that not only articulated the pan-African vision of the movement and its demands for social justice, but that celebrated the cultural practices and symbols of Rastafari.

King does a credible job in mapping the general contours and themes of these musical developments against the backdrop of a changing Jamaican society. In the course of this he shows how the roots of Rastafari musical protest are organically intertwined with the development of both preceding forms. While this is hardly newsworthy to many aficionados of Jamaican music, King provides some interesting examples that illustrate how critical commentary and protest themes, however restrained, existed within ska lyrics from the outset. The occasional presence of Rastafari drumming, biblical references (e.g., River Jordan, Mount Zion), and allusions to repatriation through the idiom of the “promised land” were all important resonances in

this music that portended the development of popular music as an important communicative medium for the Rasta movement.

King describes rocksteady as a music that is more aggressive, that speaks more directly to the collective frustrations and suffering experienced by the island's lower classes. Frequently, this music celebrates the "Rude Boy" or new male ghetto rebel as he has been memorialized in popular discourse. Prince Buster's "Too Hot" and Derrick Morgan's "Tougher Than Tough" are both examples of this figure, an individual who sought social and political justice with a ratchet (knife) or a gun. King points out that rocksteady lyrics tended to condone more aggressive protest against the oppression of the "sufferah" class, while in specific cases evoking linkages with the general Rastafari critique of the "Babylonian" neocolonial system.

Of critical importance to the dissemination and popularization of this music, King notes, were "sound systems" developed to carry high-fidelity playback equipment to rural and urban dances throughout the island. This portable technology, he argues, enabled the development of a community of dissent by transporting music to sites where "the voice of the poor could be heard without interference by local authorities" (p. 16), a development that continued from the era of ska through reggae to the present. It is certainly true that sound systems served to strengthen an already extant discourse of protest, but King fails to recognize that long before sound systems, the Rasta movement itself was about creating alternative spaces for face-to-face communication in which counter-hegemonic discourse was reproduced and disseminated.

Many readers will be disappointed by the fact that King does not access any of the subjects who actually created this music. While he did interview a number of the key figures among the Jamaican intelligentsia, his analysis is weakened by what appears to be his near complete reliance on secondary sources. Furthermore, some of his descriptive categories are incommensurate with the cultural reality of the Rastafari. Major parts of King's analysis hinge on his use of a version of social movement theory to frame the ways in which the government and the dominant society responded to Rastafari. In this regard, he discusses strategies of aversion, counter-persuasion, coercion, and adjustment, all supposedly being forms of social control exercised by the Jamaican government or representatives of the dominant society. These seem overly cumbersome. In my view King's discussion would have been more effective if he had simply limited it to the modes of repression and co-optation brought to bear on the movement.

King appears to have a somewhat shaky grasp of the stages through which Rastafari has evolved as a polycephalous or acephalous movement. Among other things, he gives little, if any attention to ways in which the Rastafari themselves met and attempted to counter strategies of social control (particularly harassment and repression) by the dominant society, and how this may be reflected in popular music. The same is true with respect to co-optation.

It is, of course, true that Rastafari symbols and imagery have been massively co-opted in Jamaica since the 1970s. King, however, fails to recognize the ways in which Rastafari have responded to this, either directly or indirectly. In Jamaica, various forms of Rastafari cultural practice, for example, have developed as sites of struggle over the definition of who and what *is* Rastafari. I have made this point elsewhere in relation to the development of islandwide ceremonial gatherings (i.e. Nyahbinghi) as they took shape from the early 1970s onward (Homiak 1999:105). During roughly this same period, “orthodox” Rastafari organizations inaugurated their own forms of traveling culture that saw Elders move throughout the Caribbean and beyond. The result is that significant numbers of Rastafari Elders now command enormous respect outside Jamaica. Such figures routinely sojourn in Rastafari communities elsewhere in the Caribbean, Africa, or North America where they serve as models for the development of cultural practice and ideology. Along with Yawney (1994), I have argued that the popularization of the Rasta message via reggae actually prepared the ground for a kind of re-missionizing by traditional Jamaican-born Elders in black communities elsewhere in the Black Atlantic world.

In other instances King misunderstands the facts, for example in citing the state visit of Haile Selassie to Jamaica in 1966 as a government strategy of “adjustment,” intended simply to appease the Rastafari. In actuality, this was a calculated gamble on the part of the conservative JLP government to destabilize the movement and quell Rastafari demands for repatriation. It was assumed by authorities that the emperor would publicly disclaim the divinity attributed to him by the brethren and thereby undermine the central tenet of the movement. The strategy backfired when the Negus awarded ceremonial gold medals to thirteen brethren and for the first time in the history of the movement gave the Rastafari a place on a national stage.

King notes that Selassie met with various Rastafari leaders at this time and was alleged to have counseled them to “liberate the Jamaican people before repatriation to Africa” (p. 34). He links this to changes in the tone of musical protest themes, arguing that it led to and exacerbated divisions between “religious” and “political” Rastafarians. Those familiar with the social history of the movement will recognize some truth in this claim, but the claim that adherents can be separated into these two camps, made all too frequently by writers who rely primarily on secondary sources rather than firsthand experience of the Rastafari, is unjustified. Inasmuch as the emperor’s visit conferred a measure of unprecedented legitimacy upon the Rastafari, it gave them a newfound standing in society from which both to plead issues of social justice and to press for their goal of repatriation.

The major shortcoming here is that King fails to explore what the labels “political” and “religious” might actually mean in the context of a movement whose members claim to orient their ideology and practice within a theo-

cratic culture. Governance and spirituality are, from a Rastafari perspective, unified parts of a single whole from a Rastafari perspective. While adherents may place different degrees of emphasis on the agencies of spirituality (e.g., chanting, prayer, and ritual) and governance (e.g., political protest and intervention with government) to achieve their ends, the theocratic orientation they share continues to unite them in their overall critique of the hegemonic order. What is lacking in parts of King's analysis is an ethnographic perspective that enables him to grasp this and understand how Rastafari can absorb political discourse (e.g., Black Power during the 1960s) yet, strictly speaking, not be politicized by it (see King pp. 50-51).

In addition to the difficulty that King encounters in sequencing the nature of Rastafari protest, he also lacks ethnographic familiarity with the organizational diversity within Rastafari (i.e. its varied "mansions") and the different stances that these organizations have taken toward the dominant society as well as the ostensible goals of the movement. He argues, for example that the internationalization of reggae exacerbated a similar split among the Rastafari. It is true that the marketing of reggae initially caused many "traditional" Rastafari to be "appalled by what they considered the commercialization and secularization of the movement" (p. 90). To this day, the House of Boboshanti, perhaps the most theocratic of all Rastafari groups, officially rejects reggae as part of their culture. Yet at the same time, it was in large measure the popularity of reggae in Jamaica and abroad that enabled Rastafari to cross over into the middle class during the 1970s. The Twelve Tribes of Israel, a Rastafari organization that flourished during that decade, facilitated this crossover and embraced reggae as the medium by which to spread their specific variant of Rasta ideology. Perhaps ironically, this organization also became the most aggressive of all Rastafari groups in pursuing repatriation of its members to Ethiopia and arguably remains so to the present. These, however, are observations that escape King's analysis.

His discussion of the ways in which reggae has been co-opted for commercial ends (via tourism) is potentially the strongest part of the book, particularly in his treatment of the phenomenon of "rent-a-dreads" (pseudo-Rastas) that ply the north coast resort areas as hustlers and as players in the trade in sexual tourism that has developed since the late 1970s. With tourism as the current number-one source of Jamaican foreign exchange, King rightly notes the economic importance of government- and tourist-board-sponsored international reggae events like *Sunsplash* and *Sunfest*. So too with the way Jamaica has capitalized upon the legacy of Bob Marley and its own definitions of Rastafari as a "peace-and-love" island vibe. If anything, King's discussion of the topic fails to go far enough in providing examples that illustrate the extent of the co-optation of Rastafari symbols that have occurred in the past decade. This would extend to advertising campaigns by Air Jamaica (with billboards announcing "Reggae bird" flights and urging consumers to



“Fly Air JAAAAH-Maica!”) as well as to adverts by Nestle (“Rasta Ice”) and Denoes and Geddes bottling (“One Beer – One People”).

King also fails to recognize that no forms of co-optation and control are absolute. He offers no discussion of how the Rastafari themselves have responded to or circumvented co-optation by the Jamaican establishment – forms of control that have sought to model “safe” perceptions of Rastafari which could dominate the public discourse about the movement and its “Jamaicanness.” The fact that Rastafari have become part of the accepted social landscape of Jamaica must be seen as due not only to the commodification of Rasta symbols made possible by the popularization of reggae, but also to a regime of resolute persistence by the movement’s culture-bearers in the face of repression throughout the colonial and much of the postcolonial era. Over the past quarter-century, it is the latter that has made the older generation of Jamaican Rastafari models of inspiration for legions of adherents outside the island.

This and other observations raise the question as to whether the Jamaican context remains an effective unit of analysis in speaking about the movement from the late twentieth century onward. King does not mention that the Rastafari movement at large now holds “observer status” within the United Nations or that Jamaican Rastafari have forged alliances with selected members of the Jamaican intelligentsia. Nor does he question whether initiatives deriving from such alliances are developments that co-opt or empower the movement. Among these developments would be the creation of the *Folkphilosophie* Program at the University of the West Indies – which, since the late 1990s, has hosted legendary Rastafari Elder, Mortimo Planno (Bob Marley’s mentor) – and the hosting of several international Rastafari conferences. One can argue that these and other expressions of what King might consider “adjustment” now provide a platform for Jamaican Rastafari that has enabled them to consolidate their networking throughout the Caribbean region and beyond. It can be argued that organizations like the Caribbean Rastafari Organization (with members throughout the Anglophone and Francophone eastern Caribbean) and the Rastafari Centralization Organization in Jamaica have enabled the international movement to sustain a focus on its goal of repatriation and to continue to its demands for social justice on multiple fronts across much of the Black Atlantic world.

*The First Rasta* (originally published in 1999 in France), is a very different kind of work, much more literary in character. Like King’s, it is ultimately linked to the music of Rastafari but on a much more personal level. Hélène Lee, a widely traveled journalist who has covered music in both the Caribbean and Africa, came naturally enough to this work. Having once been married to two major stars of African music, Salif Keita and Cote d’Ivoire’s reggae star Alpha Blondy, she covered reggae during its international ascendancy in the

1970s. Infected with curiosity about the sustaining root source of the Rastafari message and how it managed to “colonize the world” in a mere thirty years after the advent of reggae, she has produced her own version of ethnography. It is one that involved living with Rastafari in Jamaica and tracking accounts of those close to “the first Rasta,” the most influential expounder of the original Rastafari message, Leonard Howell, as well as those around the most famous Rasta, Bob Marley, and other reggae luminaries.

Howell is widely acknowledged as the first person to proclaim the divinity of Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. Like Garvey, he was among the tens of thousands of emigrated Jamaicans returning to the island during the 1920s and early 1930s at the onset of the Great Depression. The majority of these individuals were widely traveled laborers who had worked in North America and throughout the Caribbean Basin and had experienced the brunt of racial prejudice in a white-controlled world. It was in the context of this collective racial experience that the revelation of an Ethiopian divinity captured the imagination of the marginalized and oppressed of Jamaica’s black masses. Of all the early Rastafari preachers, it was arguably Howell’s mission that was the broadest and most successful. He proselytized not only in Kingston, but throughout the eastern parishes of St. Thomas, Portland, and St. Mary. Here his message of African redemption struck a responsive cord among rural plantation workers, many of whom were descendants of Central Africans who came to Jamaica as indentured laborers during the post-Emancipation period. Many of these rural converts followed Howell and helped him to establish his legendary commune in St. Catherine known as “Pinnacle.”

Lee offers some new materials to scholars of Rastafari as well as to a general readership interested in the movement. She interviewed a number of Howell’s former followers from Pinnacle, as well as most of his children and other surviving members of his extended family. Her interviews provide some interesting insights into the myths that surround Howell as prophet, mystic, traveler, and writer. Thanks to Lee’s work, we can add to this list the titles of healer and businessman. She spent time tracing Howell’s activities in New York City during the period of the Harlem Renaissance and turned up some speculative evidence that Howell may well have functioned as a healer or operator of a “tea room” where folk decoctions were dispensed. She also spent considerable time attempting to trace Howell’s business dealings from the time he purchased the estate in St. Catherine where he established his commune. This she links to his alleged subsequent dealing with the government as a major producer and exporter of ganja. In Rastafari circles, talk of an association between Howell and an international ganja trade has circulated for decades. To my knowledge, Lee is the first person to place Howell at the center of Jamaica’s developing international ganja trade in the early 1950s and to link him to politically connected local businessmen (pp. 196-

200). This, as is generally assumed, is linked to the ultimate destruction of Howell's commune and its economic base in 1954.

While there is clearly original field research (as well as archival research) behind her book, Lee's passion in telling a story as opposed to documenting and contextualizing the complex convolutions and twists in the development of a subaltern reality will present some frustrations for scholars of the movement. Lee points to the fact that she draws liberally upon the seminal work of Robert Hill, the Jamaican-born Garvey scholar who has researched Howell's impact on the genesis of the movement (Hill 1981); to a lesser extent she also acknowledges the work of Ras Michael Lorne, himself a publisher and student of Howell. In much of what the book covers with respect to the proto-Rastafari figures, and ideas and events surrounding Howell, however, it is difficult to discern where Lee is drawing on the work of these individuals and where she is leavening the text with her own insights. I have not seen the book in its original French edition (published by Flammarion in 1999), but in the English version footnotes are sparse and her references are applied to broad swaths of text, making it difficult to decipher precisely what is being cited and credited to another authorial source.

Most of the text dealing with Howell reads more like biography than ethnography. At times, one wonders if Lee knows what to make of all the information she has gathered and I suspect that she is hindered by her lack of in-depth knowledge of the sociocultural context in which the founders of the movement worked. This comes through in her treatment of Howell's leadership role in the early movement. Clearly, he was a leader with enormous charisma, but there is little in this book that gives insight into the relationship between Howell – the prophet – and his followers. From my own work with two groups of Howell's followers (some of whom were with him at Pinnacle), it is clear that Howell drew creatively on the cultural practices and worldview associated with both Kumina and the Revival complex to enhance his stature and to organize the ritual life of his followers at Pinnacle (see Bilby & Leib 1985). This reflects the fact that many of Howell's converts from rural St. Thomas were most certainly practitioners of Kumina, a family-based ancestor-oriented religion. Lee barely mentions these points.

While Lee notes the presence of Kumina drumming at Pinnacle, she apparently lacks a perspective from which to explore the broader implications and meaning of this tradition for Howell's followers. Nor does she have a way of linking the ritual life at Pinnacle to subsequent developments among the Rastafari after the Jamaican government raided and dismantled the commune in the mid-1950s. This is an omission of some significance since it is well known that many of those individuals who played key roles in the development of the movement's Dreadlocks cultural efflorescence were frequent visitors at Pinnacle, either to attend services or procure ganja. The Howellite-Dreadlocks connection thus remains obscured. In accounting for the transition

from the demise of Howell's commune to the next phase of the movement's development, Lee simply notes that "The Rastas of the 1960s were ghetto dwellers with an urban agenda" (p. 218). While it can certainly be argued that the ghettos of Kingston became the focal point for the movement during this decade, the movement, even during the heyday of Howell's influence, has always involved a back and forth between rural and urban contexts. And this was true for both followers of Howell and other early Rastafari leaders.

A similar underdeveloped sociology influences the way in which Lee construes other developments in Rastafari. At times this means using literary devices as opposed to substantive evidence to fashion the connective tissue between developments that are, in fact, sociological rather than merely narrative. In a chapter entitled "The Nya-Binghis," for example, she briefly explores the source of the term "Nyabinghi" (the name of an African secret society supposedly bent on race war), as coming from an article of Italian fascist propaganda that sought to undermine support for Emperor Selassie's fight against Mussolini's invasion in 1935. Lee points out that the racist overtones associated with the term Nyabinghi (said to be translatable as "death to the whites") combined with widespread sympathy for the Ethiopian struggle among Jamaicans. Against this backdrop, there was also Howell's highly publicized trial for sedition for his public declaration that with the crowning of Emperor Haile Selassie, Jamaican blacks no longer owed allegiance to the king of England, George VI. From the alchemy of these coincident events, Lee concludes that "Suddenly, every Rasta in Jamaica wanted to join the Nya-Binghis" (p. 93). Here, Lee gives misplaced organizational concreteness to the concept of Nyabinghi (similar to her treatment of the discourse of Jamaican Ethiopianism). What actual currency the term Nyabinghi may have had in the early movement is somewhat questionable, and, counter to Lee's implication, there was certainly never any group at the time known as "the Nya-Binghis." From the 1950s onward, as the Rastafari began to develop their own distinctive cultural practices, the term did accrete a number of meanings in addition to its initial significance as a term of racial protest. Ultimately it became a kind of omnibus term referring to the movement's stance of non-violent resistance, to the ritual-drumming-chanting complex of Rastafari, and to the loosely-knit organization later known as the House of Nyabinghi. The sequencing of these developments, however, is missed by Lee.

At times, Lee's understandings of the cultural backdrop and aesthetic sensibilities against which Rastafari evolved seems insufficient for her to do justice to the complexities of her story. For example, she notes the importance of several early proto-Rastafari texts, *The Holy Piby* and *The Royal Parchment Scroll of Black Supremacy*, that circulated among members of the movement. But she treats these as though they were lifted "whole cloth" by adherents and stamped into doctrinal status. By contrast, my experience



HOMIAK, JOHN P., 1999. Movements of Jah People: From Soundscape to Mediascape. In John Pulis (ed.), *Religion, Diaspora, and Cultural Identity: A Reader in the Anglophone Caribbean*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach Publishers, pp. 87-123.

KING, STEPHEN A., 2002. *Reggae, Rastafari, and the Rhetoric of Social Control*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press.

LEE, HÉLÈNE, 1999. *Le premier Rasta*. Paris: Flammarion.

—, 2003. *The First Rasta: Leonard Howell and the Rise of Rastafarianism*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books.

O'BRIEN CHANG, KEVIN & WAYNE CHEN, 1998. *Reggae Routes: The Story of Jamaican Music*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

ROSKIND, ROBERT A., 2001. *Rasta Heart: A Journey into One Love*. Blowing Rock NC: One Love Press.

WEBER, TOM, 1992. *Reggae Island: Jamaican Music in the Digital Age*. Kingston: Kingston Publishers Limited.

YAWNEY, CAROLE D., 1994. Rasta Mek a Trod: Symbolic Ambiguity in a Globalizing Religion. In Terisa E. Turner & Bryan J. Ferguson (eds.), *Arise Ye Mighty People!: Gender, Class & Race in Popular Struggles*. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, pp. 75-83.

JOHN P. HOMIAK  
Department of Anthropology  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington DC 20560, U.S.A.  
<Homiak.Jake@nmnh.si.edu>

BOOKSHELF 2004

The longer we're in this game, the more we're tempted to classify people according to their replies when we invite them to review books. At the bottom of the hierarchy are those who say yes, receive the review copy, and are – at least in terms of the business at hand – never heard of again. A close second are those who simply never reply to the invitation – no “yes,” no “no,” no suggestions for someone else to contact. Given how long it takes to email a “no thanks,” this strikes us the height of collegial discourtesy. It's in this context that we so deeply appreciate colleagues who do send in their reviews, whether promptly or just under the wire. As in past issues, we take this opportunity to convey our gratitude, and that of our readers, for their faithful contributions to the journal.

In this same vein, we are pleased to announce that this year's Caribbeanist Hall of Shame includes only six delinquents – six books that cannot be discussed in the journal because the scholars who agreed to review them have, despite reminder letters, neither provided a text nor relinquished the books so that we could assign them to someone else. As has become our custom, we indicate slack reviewers' names with both initial and final letters, in an attempt to forestall false accusations and protect the reputations of the innocent.

- *Slavery Without Sugar: Diversity in Caribbean Economy and Society Since the 17th Century*, edited by Verene A. Shepherd (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. ix + 284 pp., paper US\$ 59.95) (R—d A. L—I)
- *The West Indians of Costa Rica: Race, Class and the Integration of an Ethnic Minority*, by Ronald N. Harpelle (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001. xx + 238 pp., cloth US\$ 70.00) (E—d T. G—n)
- *The Sugar Industry and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1775-1810*, by Selwyn H.H. Carrington (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. ix + 362 pp., cloth US\$ 59.95) (C—r L. B—n)
- *More Than Black: Afro-Cubans in Tampa*, by Susan D. Greenbaum (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. 383 pp., cloth US\$ 55.00) (F—x M—d-P—o)

- *Witchcraft and Welfare: Spiritual Capital and the Business of Magic in Modern Puerto Rico*, by Raquel Romberg (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. xxviii + 315 pp., paper US\$ 24.95) (S—n G—y)
- *Encumbered Cuba: Capital Markets and Revolt, 1878-1895*, by Susan J. Fernandez (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. ix + 203 pp., cloth US\$ 59.95) (L—n G—a)

It is our custom to begin our annual review with literary works (which by tradition do not receive full reviews in the *NWIG*). For a change, we start with works in English. Derek Walcott offers up another rich gift, *The Prodigal* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2004, cloth US\$ 20.00), jacket graced with his watercolor of a rural Saint Lucian street scene, contents roaming around the broader Atlantic world, from Greenwich Village to Cartagena to the church spires and train stations of Europe and back again to the dolphins and angels of his beloved Caribbean – a joy. *It Falls into Place* (London: Papillotte Press, 2004, paper £7.99) brings together for the first time the shorter fiction of Phyllis Shand Alfrey, which moves between London, New York, and her native Dominica, and delicately mixes a hard-nosed gaze on colonialism with West Indian humor. *The Poetry of Slavery: An Anglo-American Anthology, 1764-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, paper US\$ 29.95), edited by Marcus Wood, offers a startlingly varied (and consistently interesting) compendium of works ranging from those by canonical authors to now-forgotten figures, black and white. The Macmillan Caribbean Writers Series (Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean) has produced several winners: in *The Annihilation of Fish and Other Stories* (2004, paper £4.95), veteran Jamaican novelist Anthony C. Winkler spins out some lively, belly-laugh-inducing short stories with his trademark sense of the absurd, set among islanders living at home and abroad, and *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight* (2004, paper £5.50) is Antiguan novelist Joanne C. Hillhouse's exploration of the lives of immigrants from the Dominican Republic in Antigua. That same series has also reprinted a trio of novels: *The Humming-Bird Tree*, by Ian McDonald (2004, £5.95), a 1969 award-winning Trinidadian work; *Brown Face, Big Master* (2003, paper £7.95), a 1969 work by Jamaican Joyce Gladwell; and *Brother Man* (2004, paper £4.95), Roger Mais's classic novel in praise of Rastafari, reissued exactly fifty years after its first publication. Wilson Harris works his special magic in two recent books, *The Dark Jester* (London: Faber & Faber, 2001, paper £9.99), yet another remarkable meditation upon history by the Guyanese master, this time bringing together conquest, empire, dreams, and memory, with the ghostly figure of Atahualpa, "the doomed Inca," always hovering nearby. And *The Mask of the Beggar* (London: Faber & Faber, 2003, cloth £16.99) begins with Odysseus's disguise upon returning at last to Ithaca, his mask fissured with Chinese, Indian, African, and European face-parts peeking through, and Quetzalcoatl and other unexpected characters



(from Trotsky to Van Gogh) making appearances in an imaginary Caribbean-Guyanese seaport called Harbourn town that becomes the setting for wide-ranging ruminations on the nature of art.

Meanwhile, in a very different vein, *The Island: Martinique* (Washington DC: National Geographic, 2003, cloth US\$ 20.00), by John Edgar Wideman, is the lightly tossed-off, self-indulgent work of a major novelist that could have had just about any location in the Caribbean as the subtitle. One learns something about Wideman and the way life looks to him as he approaches sixty, but precious little about Martinique – hardly surprising since he seems to have spent most of his brief time there playing around in bed with his new French companion.

Edwige Danticat once again shows her spell-binding talents in *The Dew Breaker* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, cloth US\$ 22.00), creating an interwoven series of powerful, heart-breaking tales of the Duvalier years and their imprint on the lives of Haitians at home and abroad that bear witness to the horrors of totalitarianism. Two welcome translations from French: Lyonel Trouillot's *Street of Lost Footsteps* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003, paper US\$ 16.95), searing yet lyrical prose recounting Haiti's nightmare and hopes, and Gisèle Pineau's *Exile According to Julia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004, paper US\$ 17.95), by one of Guadeloupe's (and the Caribbean's) most interesting emerging novelists.

Still in the Anglophone zone, we'd like to mention a terrific documentary film which we previewed recently in São Paulo, in the presence of Lord Superior: *Calypso Dreams*, directed by Geoffrey Dunn & Michael Horne ([www.calypsodreams.com](http://www.calypsodreams.com)). It's filled with rare historical footage of great calypsonians, as well as touching conversations between Sparrow, Calypso Rose, and many others. Great sound track, guaranteed enjoyment.

Four works of literary criticism not otherwise reviewed in our pages. Fabian Adekunle Badejo's *Salted Tongues: Modern Literature in St. Martin* (Philipsburg, St. Martin: House of Nehesi, 2003, paper US\$ 15.00), is a long-needed introduction to the St. Martin literary and publishing scene. *Vanguardia Latinoamericana: Historia, crítica y documentos*, by Gilberto Mendonça Teles & Klaus Müller-Bergh (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2002, paper € 24.00) is a rather strangely conceived Spanish-language anthology of works from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana that are said to represent the twentieth-century "vanguardia": Carpentier, Lezama Lima, Ballagas, Césaire (and a bit of Glissant), Saint-John Perse, and so on. *Black Subjects: Identity Formation in the Contemporary Narrative of Slavery*, by Arlene R. Keizer (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 18.95), is a theoretically sophisticated and engaging analysis of diasporic literature, two of whose chapters consider Paule Marshall's *The Chosen Place*, *The Timeless People* and Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain*. Michelle M. Wright's *Becoming Black: Creating Identity*

in the *African Diaspora* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 22.95), also theoretically sophisticated, with a strong feminist undertone, treats the historical engagements of writers and thinkers from the United States, Europe, and the Caribbean with black subjectivity.

There is a miscellany of works for which we were unable to find willing reviewers (in one case after six attempts), including a book that won the prestigious Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Award for Caribbean Scholarship – *La ayuda militar como negocio: Estados Unidos y el Caribe*, by Humberto García Muñiz & Gloria Vega Rodríguez (San Juan: Ediciones Callejón, 2002, paper US\$ 22.50). Others are *Idioma, bilingüismo, y nacionalidad: La presencia del Inglés en Puerto Rico*, by Roamé Torres-González (San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2002, paper n.p.); *Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint*, by Eugenio Matibag (New York: Palgrave, 2003, cloth US\$ 55.00); *Talking Rhythm Stressing Tone: The Role of Prominence in Anglo-West African Creole Languages*, by Hubert Devonish (Kingston: Arawak, 2002, paper US\$ 20.00); *The European Union and the Commonwealth Caribbean*, edited by Stephen J.H. Dearden (Hampshire U.K.: Ashgate, 2002, cloth US\$ 69.95); *Black Heretics, Black Prophets: Radical Political Intellectuals*, by Anthony Bogues (New York: Routledge, 2003, paper US\$ 22.95); *Democracy Delayed: The Case of Castro's Cuba*, by Juan J. López (Baltimore MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, cloth US\$ 42.50); *A Fierce Hatred of Injustice: Claude McKay's Jamaica and His Poetry of Rebellion* (New York: Verso, 2000, cloth US\$ 25.00), Winston James's masterful analysis of the poet's early years in Jamaica and his pioneering use of Jamaican Creole, as well as an anthology of his early poems; and *This Land is Our Land: Immigrants and Power in Miami*, by Alex Stepick, Guillermo Grenier, Max Castro & Marvin Dunn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003, paper US\$ 19.95), a penetrating, accessible overview of the ongoing remaking of Miami.

Two colleagues who fell ill when their reviews were in the pipeline had to focus fully on their health; in citing the titles they would have written about, we wish them both a complete and speedy recovery: *Creating Their Own Space: The Development of an Indian-Caribbean Musical Tradition*, by Tina K. Ramnarine (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2001, paper US\$ 25.00), and *A History of St Kitts: The Sweet Trade*, by Vincent K. Hubbard (Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2002, paper £17.95).

We move now from the general toward the specific. *Challenging the Boundaries of Slavery*, by David Brion Davis (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2003, cloth US\$ 18.95), an expansion of three lectures delivered at Harvard, is a wide-ranging exploration of its subject. The opening chapter on the origins and nature of New World slavery, perhaps the single best introduction we have ever read, includes such well-chosen nuggets as "By 1820, at least ten million African slaves had arrived in the New World,

as opposed to a grand total of two million Europeans.” *Introduction to the Pan-Caribbean*, edited by Tracey Skelton (London: Hodder Arnold, 2004, paper £19.99), is a slim geography textbook, designed for who-knows-what readership, which consistently misspells Herskovits. *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, edited by Linda M. Heywood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, paper US\$ 23.00), an essential compilation for historically minded Caribbeanists, particularly in its African background chapters, also includes several chapters on Haiti and one on Guyana. In *Slavery on the Frontiers of Islam*, edited by Paul Lovejoy (Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2004, paper US\$ 69.95), only two chapters are devoted to the Americas, one by David Trotman on nineteenth-century Muslims in Trinidad, the other a broad survey by Lovejoy himself. *Brothers and Strangers: Black Zion, Black Slavery, 1914-1940*, by Ibrahim Sundiata (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003, paper US\$ 24.95) is an impressive scholarly treatment of modern Liberian history, set firmly within the Atlantic world, that devotes a number of pages to Garvey’s UNIA and its decisive role. The fifty or so pages on Garvey are the only substantial Caribbean links in Wilson Jeremiah Moses’s *Creative Conflict in African American Thought: Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Marcus Garvey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 23.99). Finally, George Reid Andrews’s *Afro-Latin America, 1800-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 19.95), a lively historical synthesis of the broader region, includes only Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic within its Caribbean purview.

Several books on Cuba: *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Aviva Chomsky, Barry Carr & Pamela Maria Smorkaloff (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003, paper US\$ 26.95), spans five hundred years of Cuban history (though focusing, appropriately, on the past century or so), presenting poems, paintings, photos, cartoons, and diverse academic articles to provide an excellent introduction to the island and its people. *Entrevistas cubanas: Historias de una nación dividida* (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2004, paper US\$ 29.95), with text by Felipe Arocena and photos by William Noland, offers a down-to-earth panorama of Cubans at home and in Miami today. *Cómo llegó la noche: Memorias*, by Huber Matos (Barcelona: Tusquets Editores, 2002, paper € 23.08), is a memoir by one of Cuba’s most famous political prisoners, Castro’s 1959 brother-in-arms who served a twenty-year sentence and now lives abroad. *Cuba Today and Tomorrow: Reinventing Socialism* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000, paper US\$ 24.95), by Max Azicri, examines the creative adjustments made by the Cuban regime during the 1990s to deal with post-Soviet realities. *The Cuban Way: Capitalism, Communism and Confrontation* (West Hartford CT: Kumarian Press, 1999, paper US\$ 21.95), by economist Ana Julia Jatar-Hausmann, looks at the same period, focusing more on the impacts of change on real people. *Haydee*

*Santamaría*, edited by Betsy Maclean (Melbourne, Australia: Ocean Press, 2003, paper US\$ 11.95), is a series of reminiscences written as homage to this *guerrillera*, arts activist, and first director of the Casa de las Américas. Finally, the *Che Guevara Reader* (Melbourne, Australia: Ocean Press, 2003, paper US\$ 23.95) is here published in a second, expanded edition, edited by David Deutschmann.

*Cuban Cinema Classics* is a five-volume set (three films per volume), available on DVD or video, featuring a series of classic Cuban documentaries made by Cuba's national film institute (ICAIC) during the revolutionary period. They have been selected, organized into thematic volumes and subtitled in English by Ann Marie Stock, who has also interviewed some of the filmmakers and included these in the series. Each a little gem and excellent for classroom use, the films are *Newsreel 49*, *For the First Time*, *Dolly Back, Now!*, *LBJ*, *Prayer for Marilyn Monroe*, *The Art of Cigars*, *Aesthetics*, *King of the Jungle*, *Looking for Chano Pozo*, *Omara*, *I Am the Song I Sing: Bola de Nieve*, and *The Hands and the Angel: Emiliano Salvador*. The Cuban Cinema Classics series is available, for US\$ 99.00 per volume, through <www.wm.edu/cubancinemaclassics>.

A handful of varied reference works: *The Caribbean Multilingual Dictionary of Flora, Fauna and Food in English, French, French Creole and Spanish*, by Jeannette Allsopp (Kingston: Arawak Publications, 2003, paper US\$ 50.00) is a serious attempt at an improbable lexicographical goal; it's fun to read, but with much to argue about – for example, it confuses Bajan *cou-cou* (made with cornmeal and okra) with French Creole *migan* (typically made with breadfruit and salt pork). *Notable Caribbeans and Caribbean Americans: A Bibliographic Dictionary*, by Serafin Méndez-Méndez & Gail A. Cueto (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2003, cloth US\$ 74.95), offers some 160 celebratory mini-portraits of athletes, musicians, writers, politicians, and others, in which Frantz Fanon rubs shoulders with J.Lo, and Tim Duncan with Wifredo Lam (whose name is consistently misspelled), and Guadeloupe's inimitable "gazelle," Marie-José Pérec, is listed under Martinique. *African Caribbeans: A Reference Guide*, edited by Alan West-Durán (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 2003, cloth US\$ 54.95) is an odd work with an unclear audience – despite its "Afro" title, it is organized by island, many of which simply give a historical-political-cultural overview, usually in fifteen pages or so, without any special reference to "African Caribbeans." *Cuban Music from A to Z*, by Cuban musicologist Helio Orovio (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 24.95), presents over 1,300 entries and 150 illustrations on the performers, genres, instruments, and history of Cuban music – a very useful guide. Olive Senior's monumental *Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage* (St. Andrew, Jamaica: Twin Guinep Publishers, 2003, cloth US\$ 75.00), singlehandedly compiled by a leading Jamaican folklorist and writer, is a labor of love, filled with useful mini-essays, accessibly writ-

ten, nicely illustrated, and suitable for school and public libraries – as well as Caribbeanists – anywhere.

Three sports histories that illuminate more than sports. In *A Nation Imagined: First West Indies Test Team: The 1928 Tour* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2003, paper US\$ 24.95), Hilary McD Beckles carefully chronicles the long buildup and then every imaginable detail culled from newspapers, photo archives, and oral testimony about the groundbreaking tour of England, as part of the commemoration of seventy-five years of Windies Test matches and their impact on regional solidarity. *Historia di baseball di Aruba e prome añanan: Di “Bomba” pa XIII Serie Mundial di Baseball Amateur*, by Clyde R. Harms with Efraim “Boei” Brion & Don Juan Perez (Oranjestad, Aruba: Clyde R. Harms, paper n.p.), goes from “bomba,” a kind of local stickball played in the 1930s, to the impact of World War II, through the participation of the Aruban team in the World Series of Amateur Baseball held in Havana in 1952, with myriad photos, boxscores, and other baseball trivia – all in Papiamentu. *Cuban Baseball: A Statistical History, 1878-1961*, by Jorge S. Figueredo (Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2003, cloth US\$ 45.00.), written by a Cuban sportswriter who worked both in Cuba and the United States, is heavily illustrated and filled with data – team rosters and standings year-by-year, all-time records, you name it.

A couple of welcome re-editions: *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought: The Historical Evolution of Caribbean Society in its Ideological Aspects, 1492-1900* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004, paper US\$ 22.00), by Gordon K. Lewis, reprints (now with a new introduction by Anthony P. Maingot) this classic of Caribbean historiography, originally published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1983, and *Montserrat: History of a Caribbean Colony*, by Howard A. Fergus (Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2004, paper £17.95), is the second edition of this 1994 book (see the favorable review in NWIG 70-3/4 [1996]), significantly revised to take into account, for example, the devastating volcanic eruption of 1995.

A pair on Jamaica: *Language in Jamaica*, by Pauline Christie (Kingston: Arawak, 2003, paper US\$ 15.00), is a brief introduction for general readers to the language situation on the island today. And *Bob Marley: The Man and His Music*, edited by Eleanor Wint & Carolyn Cooper (Kingston: Arawak, 2003, paper US\$ 20.00), includes selected papers from the 1995 UWI conference, “Marley’s Music: Reggae, Rastafari, and Jamaican Culture,” that marked the fiftieth anniversary of the singer’s birth.

There are more than the usual share of Suriname-related publications. *A Mercenary’s Tale*, by Karl Penta (London: John Blake Publishing, 2002, cloth £15.99), reveals that this British helpmeet of Ronnie Brunswijk didn’t much like Maroon cooking (“a plate of rice with a piece of foul-smelling meat on top in a sauce that tasted like Castrol GTX motor oil”) or the large pots containing the severed heads and other body parts of government soldiers

that were used in the Jungle Commandos' "voodoo" ceremonies, but he does serve up an outsider's sensationalist view of numerous incidents in the Suriname civil war. *Clarence Seedorf: De biografie*, by sportswriter Simon Zwartkruis (Antwerp: Houtekiet, 2003, cloth € 15.00), will be of interest to fans of Dutch and Suriname football (soccer). *Tree of Forgetfulness (Boom der vergetelheid, L'arbre de l'oubli, A bon fu frigiti): Memories of the African Diaspora*, by Laura Samsom Rous & Hans Samsom (Amsterdam: KIT, 2003, paper € 29.50), is a coffee-table book with very little text, showing photos from Benin, Suriname, and the Netherlands, and suggesting that "Dahomey" was the source of Suriname's Maroons – who in the world is this meant for?! *Surinam: Switi Sranan*, by Toon Fey (Amsterdam: KIT, 2003, paper € 37.50) is a well-meaning and predictable coffee-table book with a consistently feel-good message – but do we need more ordinary photobooks about the country? *Caribbean Talk: 1000 Proverbs and Sayings from the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora*, by Julian H.A. Neijhorst (Paramaribo: Julian H.A. Neijhorst, 2003, paper € 10.00), is a homespun celebratory miscellany, published on the occasion of Suriname's hosting of Carifesta, drawing on diverse sources and providing English translations. *Over 'natuurgenooten' en 'onwillige honden': Beeldvorming als instrument voor uitbuiting en onderdrukking in Suriname 1842-1862*, by Patricia D. Gomes (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2003, paper € 14.50), is a provocative analysis of the battles about slave emancipation, as seen through representations and stereotypes, in the Netherlands and Suriname. *Susanna du Plessis: Portret van een slavenmeesteres*, by Hilde Neus-van der Putten (Amsterdam: KIT, 2003, paper € 21.50), adds new information to the polemics about this woman which were launched in print by John Gabriel Stedman during her lifetime, and which continue in various publications today; interested readers should see Wim Hoogbergen's review in *Oso* 2004, pp. 184-87. Finally, there is *Elizabeth Samson, Forbidden Bride*, by Carolyn Procter (Las Vegas NV: Joshua Tree, 2004, paper US\$ 17.95), an earnest first novel by a former U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Suriname. Trying to do far too many things at once, this work, set during the height of the Maroon wars, packs in – often word for word – dozens of eighteenth-century incidents taken from *Stedman's Surinam*, *Frontier Society*, *To Slay the Hydra*, and other well-known works on the colony (not to mention Cynthia McLeod's 1993 *Elizabeth Samson*). In our view it is tedious and unsuccessful as literature.

'*Trouw aan de blanken*': *Quassie van Nieuw Timotibo, twist en strijd in de 18de eeuw in Suriname*, by Frank Dragenstein (Amsterdam: KIT, 2004, paper € 12.50), is a welcome little book, published under the auspices of the recently established NiNsee (Nationaal Instituut Nederlands Slavernijverleden en Erfenis, "National Institute for the History and Heritage of Dutch Slavery"). It is cast in the mode of a straightforward, narrative history, as if written for a high-school-level readership. Compiling and condensing much of the previously published materials on Quassie, surely one of the most fascinating

Surinamers of the eighteenth century (who, among other things, discovered the medicinal properties of the plant later named after him, *Quassia amara* – consistently misspelled in this book), it also adds new bits and pieces from the archives. In our view, the book nevertheless suffers from a bias against oral history and from an old-fashioned, and methodologically suspect search for African equivalents in words and names. Indeed, there is considerable irony in the combination of Dragenstein's attempt to write politically correct history and his insistence on calling the Saramaka leader Ayako by a name (Quakoe) that he derives from written documents (and that, to make matters worse, refers to an entirely different person). In other words, Dragenstein's disdain for oral history (including details confirmed repeatedly by archival documents) renders his narrative of Saramaka history incomprehensible to the very people that his revisionist ideology should be targeting. Another sign of sloppiness comes up in Dragenstein's discussion of the name used for Quassie by Saramakas, "Kwasimukamba," which RP first reported twenty-five years ago in a long article in the *Bijdragen* (a reference missing from Dragenstein's bibliography). Dragenstein asserts that *mukamba* (which is in fact a common Central African place and personal name) means "whiteman," and gives as his source for this information *First-Time*, but here he has apparently confused *mukamba* with *kibamba*, the word that, as RP reported, Saramaka forest spirits use for "whiteman." RP's subsequent fieldwork with Saramakas has been revealing much additional information about Quassie/Kwasimukamba which will, once published, expand in sometimes startling directions the interesting picture Dragenstein attempts to sketch in here.

For the last twenty years, Michiel van Kempen has been our most thoughtful and prolific critic of Suriname literature. In 2002, he defended his nearly fifteen hundred-page dissertation, which took the story up till 1975. Now he has published an updated, more accessible version, in two volumes, handsomely boxed and richly illustrated, covering the whole history: *Een geschiedenis van de Surinaamse literatuur, band I: 1596-1957, band II: 1957-2000* (Breda, the Netherlands: De Geus, 2003, cloth € 125.00). In more ways than one can count, the book is overwhelming (what erudition!). Including more than 100 pages of bibliography, it is a monument, but also a delightful and engaging read, from oral literature, including dance, theater, and song (Carib, Arawak, Trio, Ndyuka, Saramaka, Creole, Hindustani, and Javanese) to all forms of written literature since the end of the sixteenth century. The whole of the second volume is devoted to literature since 1957 and, like the earlier volume, includes numerous word portraits of writers. Getting this book out in English would, in one fell swoop, bring Surinamese literature into critical dialogue with other Caribbean (and world) literatures. Are there any imaginative and courageous Dutch foundations out there?

Turning our view to the rest of the Dutch Caribbean empire, *Wereldoorlog in de West: Suriname, de Nederlandse Antillen en Aruba, 1940-1945*, by

Liesbeth van der Horst (Amsterdam: Verzetsmuseum/Hilversum: Verloren, 2004, paper € 10.00), was written to accompany an exhibition in the Verzetsmuseum, Amsterdam. This illustrated history carefully documents the effects of the war on the Dutch colonies (with striking pictures of American GIs and Suriname *meisjes* as well as Coca-Cola everywhere) and the roles they played in defending themselves and the motherland. *Oog op Aruba Bonaire Curaçao: Geschiedenis, cultuur en natuur van de ABC-eilanden*, text Jeannette van Ditzhuijzen, photography Bertie and Dos Winkel (Rijswijk, the Netherlands: Elmar, 2003, cloth € 27.50), is a coffee-table miscellany of forts and other historic buildings, underwater shots of tropical fish and coral, mangroves, birds, animals, and more. *Portraits of Bonaire: Paintings and Stories*, with paintings by Henk Roozendaal and stories by Guus Gerritsen (Gent, Belgium: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 2002, cloth € 25.00), is an affectionate bilingual Dutch/English offering to Bonaire made by two Dutchmen, who independently, in middle age, chose to make their lives there.

While we await a full review, we signal the publication of a remarkable critical edition of one of the fundamental texts on Caribbean slavery and missions, Christian Georg Andreus Oldendorp's *Historie der caribischen Inseln Sanct Thomas, Sanct Crux und Sanct Jan, insbesondere der dasigen Neger und der Mission der evangelischen Brüder unter denselben. (Kommentierte Ausgabe des vollständigen Manuskriptes aus dem Archiv der Evangelischen Brüder-Unität Herrnhut)*, edited by Gudrun Meier, Stephan Palmié, Peter Stein & Horst Ulbricht (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 2000-2. Part I, 764 pp. + 38 plates; Part II, published in three separate volumes, 2171 pp.). This monumental project, begun in the 1980s, at last makes Oldendorp's original available, with detailed commentaries by specialists in a number of domains.

Three on French Guiana, all from Ibis Rouge Publications. Marie Polderman has brought forth her enormous (721-page) doctoral thesis defended at Toulouse, *La Guyane française 1676-1763: Mise en place et évolution de la société coloniale, tensions et métissage* (Matoury, French Guiana: Ibis Rouge, 2004, paper € 40.00), which contains a wealth of detailed data never before published. *La Guyane française (1715-1817): Aspects économiques et sociaux. Contribution à l'étude des sociétés esclavagistes d'Amérique* (Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge, 1999, paper € 24.39), by Brazilian polymath Ciro Flamarion Cardoso, has been published in full nearly thirty years after it was written as a doctoral thesis in Paris; this prize-winning, theoretically ambitious book remains the essential source for understanding the economic underpinnings of eighteenth-century French Guiana. And *Migration et sida en Amazonie française et brésilienne* (Matoury, French Guiana: Ibis Rouge, 2004, paper € 22.00), by anthropologist and AIDS specialist Frédéric Bourdier, carefully analyzes the relationship between migration and infection in the northern Amazon, from Belem to Cayenne. Ibis Rouge has also brought out



Sandrine Colombo's *La route des rhums* (2002, paper € 17.00), with photos by Sophie Hayot, a handy guidebook (historical, touristic) to the nineteen distilleries still functioning in Martinique, Guadeloupe (and Marie-Galante), and Guyane, and Martine Couadou's *Serpent, manitou et ... dorlis: Bestiaire symbolique martiniquais* (2000, paper € 13.57), which recounts Martiniquan folk beliefs concerning animals, seen and imagined, that inhabit the islandscape.

Three books highlight the often neglected Amerindian side of the Caribbean past and present. *The Great Encounter: Native Peoples and European Settlers in the Americas, 1492-1800*, by Jayme A. Sokolow (Armonk NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003, paper US\$ 25.95), is a bland, politically correct history written for a general audience, with nothing new for Caribbeanists. In contrast, Matthew Restall's *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, paper US\$ 14.95) is a largely successful unpacking of encounter and conquest, also intended for a general audience, but written by someone who is actively engaged in university teaching and communicates his revisionism with persuasiveness and verve. *In Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault Sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazonia*, edited by Neil L. Whitehead & Robin Wright (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 22.95), continues and broadens Whitehead's investigations into dark shamanism and assault sorcery among Amerindians in the Guianas, reviewed in *NWIG* 78(3/4), by covering similar practices in the Brazilian and neighboring lowland areas of South America. It's provocative and engaging.

Several miscellaneous works, which we group promiscuously. *Bread Made from Yuca: Selected Chronicles of Indo-Antillean Cultivation and Use of Cassava 1526-2002* (New York: Interamericas, 2003, paper n.p.), edited by Jane Gregory Rubin & Ariana Donalds, features photographs and prose by Marisol Villanueva about manioc in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the region, and, along with excerpts from Oviedo and others, constitutes a paean to this tropical American staple and the cultures that grew up around it. *The Cycle of Racial Oppression in Guyana*, by Kean Gibson (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 2003, paper US\$ 23.00) is an essay on the roots of racism in Guyana and its effects on contemporary politics. *Bahamian Culture and Factors which Impact Upon It: A Compilation of Two Essays*, by Donald M. McCartney (Pittsburgh PA: Dorrance, 2004, paper US\$ 9.00), is a slim pair of ruminations by a Bahamian educator on local culture and history. *The Costa Rica Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, edited by Steven Palmer & Iván Molina (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2004, paper US\$ 22.95) provides an excellent introduction to the country, without slighting the Caribbean coast and its West Indian connections. *Writing JFK: Presidential Rhetoric and the Press in the Bay of Pigs Crisis*, by Thomas W. Benson (College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2004, paper US\$ 14.95), analyzes presidential image-making (damage/spin control), using the Bay of Pigs invasion as his case study. *At the Rainbow's Edge: Selected Speeches of Kenny D. Anthony*

1996-2002, edited by Didaeus Jules & Tennyson S.D. Joseph (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2004, £ 25.00), presents nearly four hundred pages, grouped under such rubrics as Domestic Politics, Regional Integration, International Issues, and so forth, by the head of the Labour Party and, since 1997, prime minister of St. Lucia, offering a wide window on island politics. *Caribbean Elegance*, by Michael Connors with photography by Bruce Buck (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002, cloth US\$ 39.95), is a chef-d'oeuvre of coffee-table imperialist nostalgia, devoted largely to often magnificent wooden furniture. It illustrates, characteristically, chairs that were designed with "excessively long arms" so that the "weary planter's ... boots could be removed" by his putting his feet up on them – but it is never specified by whom (hint: it wasn't his wife).

Two conference proceedings: *Governance in the Age of Globalisation: Caribbean Perspectives*, edited by Denis Benn & Kenneth Hall (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2003, cloth \$50.00), presents over thirty contributions to a 2002 conference at UWI-Mona, ranging from a large number by card-carrying political scientists to Carolyn Cooper's lively account of representations of governance in Jamaican popular culture. And *Land in the Caribbean: Issues of Policy, Administration and Management in the English-Speaking Caribbean*, edited by Allan N. Williams (Madison: USAID/Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2003, paper n.p.), offers the proceedings of a workshop held in Port-of-Spain in 2003 that included representatives from thirteen CARICOM states (including Suriname).

We end with two light books for a general audience by Owen Platt: *One Big Fib: The Incredible Story of the Fraudulent First International Bank of Grenada* (New York: iUniverse, 2003, paper US\$ 18.95), and *The Royal Governor... and the Duchess: The Duke and Duchess of Windsor in the Bahamas, 1940-1945* (New York: iUniverse, 2003, paper US\$ 13.95), the first chronicling how an American con man's evangelical passion combined with a prime minister's greed to create a tangled web of offshore chicanery (an incredible story if even half true), and the second a reprise of royal muck that several other authors have already rather fully raked.

RICHARD PRICE & SALLY PRICE

Anse Chaudière

97217 Martinique

<rixsal@earthlink.net>

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*. MARCUS WOOD. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. ix + 467 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

LYNN M. FESTA  
Department of English  
Harvard University  
Cambridge MA 02138, U.S.A.  
<lfesta@fas.harvard.edu>

Marcus Wood's *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* seeks to unearth the cultural heritage of slavery in Britain from the eighteenth century to the present day by charting the discursive triangle trade between the three central terms of the title. Using a dazzling array of primary materials and moving adroitly among disciplines and fields, Wood locates British discussions of slavery in the context of evangelical social reform, pornographic reading practices, and the cult of sensibility. Like Wood's remarkable *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780-1865* (2000), *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* weaves together eighteenth- and nineteenth-century representations of slavery and their modern incarnations to argue that the legacy of slavery haunts life in Britain to the present day.

Theoretically informed and provocatively and passionately argued, Wood's book uses close readings of texts and careful historical contextualization to strip away the rhetorical camouflage that hides the trauma of slavery in seemingly plain sight. Drawing on Shoshana Felman, Paul de Man, and Primo Levi's work on Holocaust testimony, Wood examines how the attempt to capture the experience of the slave may aestheticize, exploit, or appropriate others' suffering. In Wood's account, the empathetic subject may become a kind of affective vampire, siphoning pleasurable feeling – even sexual pleasure – from the wracked body of the slave. Wood's analysis of empathy's theater of cruelty usefully qualifies recent accounts of the sociable effects of sensibility.

Although not intended as a survey, the book covers a dazzling amount of territory. The literary trajectory of the argument embraces the writings of late eighteenth-century evangelical and former slave-trader John Newton and the poet William Cowper, all the major Romantic poets (excepting Byron), and novelists from Austen and Brontë to their modern counterparts, Caryl

Phillips and Jean Rhys. Wood offers a cogent synthesizing account of the way these writers work through images of slavery and uncovers new terrain for scrutiny in, for example, his fascinating discussion of Robert Southey's defense of the Maroon leader Zumbi in Southey's *History of Brazil* (1817-19). The explicitly political writings on slavery analyzed by Wood encompass turn-of-the-century radical reformers like William Cobbett and John Thelwall, the abolitionist Harriet Martineau, and the high Victorian social prophets, Carlyle and Ruskin. These chapters offer thoroughly researched, insightful accounts of the way slavery reconfigures the overall oeuvre of each of these thinkers, as well as a considered appraisal of the broader political currents that shaped their thought. Harbored within even ostensibly progressive political writings, Wood demonstrates, is a pernicious strain that advances the claims of the English worker by pitting his or her suffering – and humanity – against that of the West Indian slave.

Each chapter presents a cluster of texts that revolve around one of the central themes of the book. Thus Wood examines how sentimental tropes veer into pornography in his reading of John Gabriel Stedman's 1796 *Narrative of a Five Year's Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Suriname*. The commoditization of the slave's body, Wood suggests, renders it particularly vulnerable to pornographic use. Comparing the Blake engravings that illustrate Stedman's account to the late-twentieth-century photographs of Robert Mapplethorpe, Wood scrutinizes the relationship between "high art" and pornography, human and sexual bondage, contending that the legacy of slavery is a shaping force within sexual subcultures today. While illuminating, such transhistorical parallels exist in an odd tension with Wood's careful historical contextualization and meticulous close reading of individual texts elsewhere. When Wood suggests, for example, that Mapplethorpe's images may be operating "in the same psychic domain as the Stedman/Blake engraving" (p. 124), he opens up the question of what such a transhistorical "psychic domain" might be. It is not clear to what degree concepts of pornography (in itself, a contentious matter) are portable across time and space, and, although Wood's contention that current scholarship on Enlightenment pornography has too often obscured the black body is persuasive, the account of the pornographic offered in the book is not thoroughly grounded in specific historical contexts.

The book's connections between historical and modern events, texts, and practices are thus suggestive but occasionally seem strained. Although the explicit, acknowledged relation between John Newton's accounts of his years as a slave trader and Phillips's *Crossing the River*, or between Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, uphold Wood's claims that slavery continues to be a historical burden that British writers cannot set down or put aside, the argument for such continuity as laid out in much of the book rests heavily on rhetorical and discursive echoes and on the strategic, if telling, juxtaposition of historical and modern images. The laudable attempt to unveil

the powerful currents that unite past and present at times obscures the material and economic factors that shape historical causality. Yet the troubling questions posed by the book and the provocative and insightful answers Wood has tendered are a measure of the ambitious scope and achievement of *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*. If the legacy of slavery continues to make itself felt, it is in part because of its discomfiting capacity to make us feel.

#### REFERENCE

WOOD, MARCUS, 2000. *Blind Memory: Visual Representation of Slavery in England and America, 1780-1865*. Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press.

*The Imaginary Caribbean and Caribbean Imaginary*. MICHÈLE PRAEGER. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. ix + 211 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

CELIA BRITTON  
Department of French  
University College London  
London WC1E 6BT, U.K.  
<celiabritton@talk21.com>

This book claims that the Imaginary plays a uniquely important role in Caribbean culture. The title opposes the way in which the Caribbean has been constructed by European and Euro-American discourses to the counter-discourses of the Caribbean itself, which, according to Praeger, above all harness the power of the imagination to generate representations of Caribbean society that are both truer and more positive. This overall framework has three disadvantages: the two senses of “Imaginary” are so different (racist ideology versus emancipatory creativity) that the concept cannot be defined with any rigor (there are a few references to the Lacanian Imaginary, but these are not developed in any depth); it locks the whole discussion into an essentialist opposition between Caribbean and non-Caribbean writers, which proves impossible to maintain, and it is not very original. The blurb on the front flap states, “this book poses a provocative question: When the Imaginary occupies the place of the Real, as in Caribbean culture and European projections of that culture, how does the Real position itself?” This might indeed be an interesting question, and it is a pity that Praeger never really answers it.

Of the six chapters, only the first is substantially concerned with the “Imaginary Caribbean” side of the dichotomy, and it is perhaps the least satisfactory of the book. It sets out to analyze “The Caribbean as Imagined by Historians and Psychoanalysts,” claiming, with little evidence, that these two discourses are dependent on each other. Praeger’s critique of Western historical accounts of the Caribbean is restricted to their supposed occultation of questions of gender, but she does not actually refer to any specific Western historians apart from Gabriel Debien, “a traditional though not overtly sexist male scholar” (p. 16), who studies pregnancy and abortion among female Caribbean slaves and whose conclusions she largely accepts. Conversely, while she claims that “the writing of Caribbean history has been, for the most part, a white fiction under the guise of a positivist interpretation of the events. Counterhistories of the Caribbean and slavery have not yet appeared” (pp. 30-31), the ten pages that she devotes to the question consist almost entirely of paraphrases of such counter-historians: bell hooks, Barbara Bush, Arlette Gautier, Marietta Morrissey, and various contributors to *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* (Shepherd, Brereton & Bailey 1995). The second half of the first chapter is based on the idea that Freudian-Lacanian theory gives a distorted picture of the Caribbean family. Here Praeger does cite specific sources: Frantz Fanon, Jacques André, and Fritz Gracchus. But her critique of Fanon concerns his “lactification complex” and has nothing to say on his use of Freud or Lacan, and although she gives a more detailed paraphrase of André and Gracchus (without commenting on their disagreements), she provides no explicit critique of their position other than one paragraph (pp. 29-30) on the anthropological work of A. Lynn Bolles, who argues that the wider kinship network mitigates the importance of the mother/son dyad that is central to the psychoanalytical perspective, and a further irrelevant paragraph on bell hooks’s analysis of black slaves’ internalization of the dominant white society’s definitions of sex roles, which Praeger wrongly believes is denied by Fanon, André, and Gracchus (p. 30). The conclusion to the chapter prepares the way for the rest of the book by affirming that only literature and the imaginative insights it provides can effectively counteract the representations of Western-imposed history and psychoanalysis.

Thus the other five chapters are devoted to French Caribbean literature. Chapter 2 looks at fictional reconstructions of Caribbean history in Glissant’s novels and Condé’s *Les derniers rois mages*, and then proceeds unexpectedly to a psychoanalytically inspired study of interracial lesbian desire in Michèle Lacroix’s *Cajou*, which, while it is hard to see how it fits into Praeger’s overall thesis, is actually the most original and interesting part of the whole book. Subsequent chapters cover representations of Martinique by Breton and Suzanne Césaire compared with those of Glissant, plus a section on oral literature; *créolité* (Chamoiseau and Confiant versus Condé); the fictional and autobiographical texts of Chamoiseau and Confiant, their attitude

toward their literary predecessors and toward the creole language; and the relationship between French Caribbean writers and metropolitan France. The main problems with all these are that their focus is very general, they cover fairly familiar ground, and the material is organized in a somewhat arbitrary fashion, so that no clear argument emerges. There are also local confusions: uncertainty as to the meaning of *chabin* (p. 137), for instance, or, more importantly, over whether *créolité* is a movement, or an objective condition equivalent to *métissage*, or simply being Caribbean. The book is clumsily written, with some careless generalizations ("the Western scene of creativity, which is one of solitude, doubt and madness," p. 140) and apparent non-sequiturs ("Caribbean and African American theoreticians urge us to look at history from the point of view of a non-elite, whether the view of the colonizers or that of the oppressed," p. 10). In order to carry out the ambitious project which she sets herself, Praeger would need to engage in far more precise, focused, and sustained analysis than this book manages to provide.

## REFERENCE

SHEPHERD, VERENE A., BRIDGET BRERETON & BARBARA BAILEY (eds.), 1995. *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

*Postnationalism Prefigured: Caribbean Borderlands*. CHARLES V. CARNEGIE. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003. iii + 241 pp. (Cloth US\$ 60.00, Paper US\$ 25.00)

JOHN COLLINS  
Department of Anthropology  
Queens College/CUNY  
Flushing NY 11367, U.S.A.  
<john\_collins@qc.edu>

Social scientists have thought especially long and hard in recent years, from a variety of disciplinary, theoretical, and subject positions, about the tensions and glories of the modern nation and the practices and categories that sustain it. Yet often implicit in these musings have been relatively unexamined European or elite subjects – as in Benedict Anderson's "modular" nationalisms – and a limited range of units of analysis – as in the territorial and race-based postcolonial nation-state. In *Postnationalism Prefigured*, Charles

Carnegie looks into the past as well as the future in an attempt to make out quite different modes of belonging and scholarship. His goal is to bring into being a new world “that nurtures the positive features of localized, patriotic attachments but does away with the fundamental contradictions inherent in the present-day nation-state order” (p. 8). One result of this desire is an eloquent, grounded, and remarkably creative book that does much to suggest new forms of politics and community.

*Postnationalism Prefigured* addresses salient debates in anthropology, history, postcolonial studies, Atlantic studies, and cultural criticism. Carnegie divides the text into three main parts, each composed of two chapters. The first, contra Anderson’s (1991:145) assertion that “the nation was conceived in language, not in blood,” explores the imbrications of race and nation from a Caribbean and very personal perspective to which I return below. Part Two blurs the boundaries of the modern nation-state through a focus on contemporary writings on diasporas and borderlands. This section’s Chapter 4, entitled “Transterritorial Lives” and based on Carnegie’s own ethnography of St. Lucia’s interisland and mainly female traders, is especially satisfying. It follows as people put together networks that, if looked at closely enough in creative ways, reveal the outlines of communities quite different from those most salient today. This discussion of transgressive and potentially liberatory associations forged in Caribbean peoples’ everyday struggles leads in Chapter 5 to a further critique of sedentarism and its vicissitudes, principally the naturalized congruence between nation and territory that Carnegie dubs the “race-nation paradigm” (p. 11). Critical to this analysis of the naturalized associations between races, peoples, and nations is the argument that identity claims by subaltern groups are typically about telling heroic pasts or fixing the meanings of such pasts. This is ironic in that “this method of recuperating pure identities is exactly the one often used to endorse the nation-state’s superordinate claim to legitimacy – the very system from which the disaffected seek relief” (p. 10).

In response to the problematic overlaps between race and nation, relationships he begins to analyze in terms of Jamaica only to expand across the Caribbean, Carnegie demonstrates how Africans and their descendants manipulated colonial agendas and sovereignties while moving about the Caribbean in search of freedom, in the process often thumbing their noses at former masters. As Carnegie explores networks of rumor, goods, and ideas put forth and spread by a mobile working class, he avoids, on one hand, the valorizations of rooted racial essences and, on the other, the relatively empty celebrations of hybridity so common to certain strands of postcolonial theory and nationalist ideology.

Despite the difficulty of the theoretical works and interactions analyzed, *Postnationalism Prefigured* is deftly written and almost completely jargon free. It would add much to advanced undergraduate and graduate courses, especially since it surveys critically an array of theory stretching from



Subaltern Studies to North American historical anthropology. It works especially well in three main ways. First, as suggested above, Carnegie modifies recent approaches to nationalism by revealing how people employed to quite different ends many of the tools typically treated as foundational to the nation-state. An example is the analysis of Marcus Garvey, print journalism, and the Black Star Shipping Line. For Garvey, the media, much more than a technology for enacting a national public sphere, were, like trade networks, ways of constructing diasporic consciousness. Nonetheless, and not surprisingly given Carnegie's goals, *Postnationalism Prefigured* suggests that Garvey's racial essentializations were understandable yet misplaced. Instead, Carnegie argues for a supranational consciousness structured around mobile experience. And the ways he develops this argument against race point, especially as they concern ethnographic method, to a second major inflection of current debates.

*Postnationalism Prefigured* builds nicely, from a very personal history of Carnegie's present, to a much broader perspective. In other words, he struggles with the tensions between anthropology's particularizing vocation and universalizing mission, two standpoints often perceived as incompatible. In doing so he contextualizes deftly each of his moves in ways that underscore the extent to which all theoretical positions are themselves historically specific even as he ties together dialectically the book's different sections and debates. Although at times I hungered for even more ethnographic and historical information, Carnegie has balanced different approaches without sacrificing readability, clarity, and, as students may appreciate, relatively short length.

In a telling example of the author's approach to knowledge, politics, and now naturalized ways of writing culture, *Postnationalism Prefigured* opens with Carnegie as a Jamaican-born academic of African descent who, as what North Americans might call an albino and Jamaicans a *dundus*, quite literally feels in his skin the contradictions of race-based belonging in the Caribbean and United States. Remarkably, even as Carnegie explores his own subjectivity and its influences on his analyses, he avoids the overly self-involved auto-ethnographies so common in late twentieth-century North America: "As a sometime 'native,' my goal is not to luxuriate temporarily in some other paradise but to lead a prison break from a conceptual framework that seems to incarcerate us all" (p. 8). He does so by combining an awareness of self with and within broader perspectives and shared experiences. The result is a text that makes clear its locus of enunciation even as it struggles to speak to all peoples.

*Postnationalism Prefigured* takes up the challenges of self-reflexive ethnographies and postcolonial theory, but it does so by continuing to struggle with the contradictions of *both* self and other in a way that seeks to overcome such dichotomies. Rather than arguing that one can know only oneself and one's "own" group, or that one must be something of an outsider in order to understand a group's dynamics, Carnegie undercuts "Anthropology's long-standing preoccupation with cultural distinctiveness [that] gives disproportionate

attention to those processes and properties of history and culture that sustain differences” so as to “engender new forms of interdependence and unity” (p. ix). This intervention alone makes the book important to contemporary debates in the human sciences.

A third strand treats the overlaps between nationalist and religious discourses. Students of nationalism have paid close attention to history, a purportedly secularizing discourse that naturalizes the state and its production of knowledge of itself as both the object and subject of history. Yet, as academics have begun to note only recently, reconstructions of the past might also be thought of in a less disenchanted manner. One might pay closer attention to the importance to history of those practices dubbed “religion” by modernizing social science. And this is how Carnegie closes his important work.

He ends his discussion of the personal, the political, and the collective by looking closely at the Bahá’í religion’s history and teachings. Here he struggles to reveal “the conceits of autonomy” and expose “the limits of the fetish of national sovereignty and awaken us to the realization that global belonging is now an irremediable, irreversible condition” (p. 177). To conclude in 2003 a work of academic, and hence ostensibly secular, cultural criticism with a move toward a religion begun in modern Iraq is quite novel, and in many ways quite hopeful. But, then again, novelty and creativity, like movement, are hallmarks of *Postnationalism Prefigured*. And in publishing such a nuanced and clear meditation based on his own ethnography and readings of a number of important contemporary theorists, Carnegie may well have begun to realize his ultimate goal of conjuring up a collective that might attend to all of our specificities.

#### REFERENCE

ANDERSON, BENEDICT, 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso. [Orig. 1983.]

*The Construction and Representation of Race and Ethnicity in the Caribbean and the World.* MERVYN C. ALLEYNE. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2002. x + 266 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

CHARLES V. CARNEGIE  
Department of Anthropology  
Bates College  
Lewiston ME 04240, U.S.A.  
<ccarnegi@bates.edu>

In his new book, the distinguished Caribbean linguist Mervyn Alleyne provides a welcome comparative analysis of racial and ethnic representations in three former Caribbean plantation societies that differ significantly in their colonial histories as well as in their contemporary cultural and political pathways – Puerto Rico, Martinique, and Jamaica – and situates these Antillean case studies in a global historical framework. While he draws on work from a variety of disciplines, Alleyne's distinctive contribution comes through his own *métier*, language, and discussion of the emergence, change, and meaning of racial terms over time and across a range of societies. Alleyne's account brings into relief aspects of the cultural politics (though he doesn't call it that) of racial representations, charting symbolic transformations through which Caribbean societies have sought to break the stranglehold of inherited pejorative racial meanings. Notwithstanding their relative successes, however, it is still the case, as Alleyne shows, that blackness and Africa remain to varying degrees stigmatized in all these Caribbean cases.

Language, Alleyne argues, preserves and allows us to get at the racial attitudes of ordinary people whose voices are otherwise lost to posterity. Pointedly, he seeks to find out “when and where and how did the semantic expansion of ‘black’ (and ‘white’) take place?” (p. vii), pursuing this question by looking at Ancient Greece and Rome, Asia and Africa in the first one-third of the book, and at the Caribbean in the remaining two-thirds. Alleyne draws on the history of European racial terms to question the thesis that racism originated in the system of trans-Atlantic slavery and New World colonization, arguing instead, that: “racism was firmly embedded and entrenched in European cultural and psychological history and ... long pre-dated the establishment of slave-based societies in the Americas” (p. 60).

Alleyne argues that the Greeks and Romans of antiquity (unlike their Egyptian and Near Eastern contemporaries) were obsessed with color, basing this conclusion on an analysis of the color terms they commonly used to classify people and places. It is to them that we owe the black/white binary opposition and corresponding negative and positive connotations that have

become so entrenched in modern thought. By comparison, these terms had a broader array of associations in neighboring societies (and in early Christianity), and were not antithetically contrastive. As Christianity spread in Europe, however, it gradually became infused with Roman and Greek ethnocentric usage and understandings of color (and, in Alleyne's view, race).

New World slavery was built on these earlier ideas and reinforced them. Yet even as Caribbean societies have been shaped by this older system of meanings, they have at the same time altered and contested them. Whereas, for example, the European world gradually merged semantic designations and meanings of black into a powerful pejorative key symbol, a process of semantic splitting has taken place in Caribbean societies that has enabled neutral and even positive meanings to develop beside pejorative ones. Thus, alongside the color term *negro* – a pejorative originally borrowed into English and French in its noun form from Spanish as a term of reference for black people (and slaves) – terms such as *black*, *noir*, and *prieto* came into common usage as neutral color descriptors in the Caribbean colonial world. So that while *negro/nègre* (or in Jamaica *niega*) retained pejorative implications, such connotations could be avoided in contexts where a straightforward color description was intended. Subsequently, and remarkably:

The nouns *negro* and *nègre* ... underwent a further development. They acquired a neutral meaning in the Hispanic and French Caribbean [coming] to express the idea of "fellow" (that is, without regard to race or colour): *un negro delgado*, *un nègre mince*, "a thin fellow." In Martinique and Puerto Rico, *nègre* and *negro* are used as forms of address and are now applied irrespective of the race of the addressee, somewhat like English "mate." (pp. 105-6)

In this regard, they are also used as terms of affection and endearment. Alleyne is at his best teasing out such nuances of Caribbean semantic innovation, and exploring the varying ways in which blackness and Africa are both valorized and denied in the Caribbean.

The book is marred, however, by an unresolved tension between a social-constructivist emphasis on language and representation on the one hand and, on the other, a contrary tendency to naturalize and reify constructed social phenomena. So, for example, Alleyne's use of terms such as "miscegenation," "gene-pool," "mating," and "progeny" buy into, reinforce, and perpetuate erroneous biological understandings of the social processes he describes. An inclination to anchor the argument in biology or psychology emerges early in the book when Alleyne notes the innate human capacity to discern and discriminate between colors, then proceeds, on the flimsiest of evidence, to claim that: "It is reasonable to suppose that colour, rather than other physical attributes such as size of torso, or shape of nose, would be a (or the) most important physical index of classification, ranking very

closely with gender and age" (p. 18). In a presentist vein, then, Alleyne privileges skin color over other co-existing modes of social stratification in various ancient societies. While it is instructive to demonstrate the marking of color distinctions in many of these societies, it is unjustifiable, in my view, to insinuate that these distinctions superseded all others, and anachronistic to describe them in terms of "race," that peculiar cultural theory that emerges in the modern West to rationalize and justify its own oppressive system of social stratification.

A similar tension marks Alleyne's Caribbean case studies. He struggles for a way to recount the sociological trajectory of racially and ethnically marked social groups without reifying their existence, even as he seeks to foreground their ideological and invented character. While we get a sense of the dynamic, changing quality of racial terms and meanings, there is not the accompanying sense that racial and ethnic groups are always being reimagined, and constituted anew. Awareness of recent work on race in the ideology of the modern West by scholars such as Charles Mills and Sylvia Wynter, work on race with particular reference to the Caribbean by anthropologists like Diane Austin-Broos, Brackette Williams, Daniel Segal, Deborah Thomas, and the present writer, and writings in the emergent field of whiteness studies by scholars such as Theodore Allen, Richard Dyer, George Lipsitz, and Ruth Frankenberg, might have allowed Alleyne to better handle this tension.

While Caribbean societies have often transformed racial symbolic meanings, they have not sought, in more radical ways, to question the classificatory order of race itself. Nor does Alleyne's perspective allow us to contemplate this latter possibility. His account could have taken us further toward understanding how the ideological classificatory order of race works, and how it might be dismantled, instead of succumbing to a sense of its inevitability. These critical observations notwithstanding, Alleyne's book is well worth reading and adopting for university courses on race and the Caribbean.

*Melville J. Herskovits and the Racial Politics of Knowledge*. JERRY GERSHENHORN. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004. xxii + 338 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00)

RICHARD PRICE  
College of William and Mary  
Williamsburg VA 23187-8795, U.S.A. and  
Anse Chaudière  
97217 Anses d'Arlet, Martinique  
<rixsal@earthlink.net>

For Caribbeanists, and Afro-Americanists more generally, this biography is both welcome and frustrating, effectively sketching a broad picture of Melville Herskovits's career and personality but delving remarkably little into the role of Afro-America beyond the United States in his life and work.<sup>1</sup> There is nary a mention of Herskovits's important intellectual relations with non-U.S. scholars such as Fernando Ortiz, Jean Price-Mars, or Arthur Ramos, and nothing of his role in the Ruth Landes affair (in which he and Ramos, following her fieldwork in Bahia, combined to keep her from getting a decent job). The pivotal research on Suriname is dealt with in less than a dozen pages, with Gershenhorn remarking that the couple "transgressed Saramacca cultural practices and violated their code of behavior" (pp. 73-74) and that MJH exhibited "cultural insensitivity" and "arrogance" (p. 74). Unfortunately, these pages include numerous ethnographic errors – for example, Gershenhorn quotes MJH about "Agun, the Nigerian god of man and iron" (p. 73) when what MJH wrote in his diary (correctly) was "Ogun, the Nigerian god of war & iron"; Gershenhorn writes that MJH describes being awakened by "the beat of a *kiva-kiva*" (p. 75), but what MJH penned into his diary was an allusion to the common Suriname instrument known as the *kwa-kwa*. Gershenhorn also reports that the Saramakas "lived along the northern part of the Suriname River" (p. 70) and that "By the end of his first Suriname trip, Herskovits could speak some *taki-taki*, the dialect of the Maroons" (p. 72). Even though Gershenhorn is a historian rather than an anthropologist, mightn't one expect him to have learned from the extensive literature what language Saramakas speak and where they live? There is very little on the year the Herskovitses spent in Brazil, though it had important implications for debates in Afro-American studies, and only a little more on their pioneer work in Trinidad and Haiti.

1. After this review was written for the *NWIG*, RP accepted a request to review it (for a general audience, rather than for Caribbeanists) in the *Times Literary Supplement*, January 7, 2005, p. 24.

Despite these shortcomings, anyone interested in the history of African and Afro-American studies will learn from Gershenhorn's accounts of the academic politics (and national policies regarding race) of the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. He shows how Herskovits's nominal Jewishness played a role in his life and work from the beginning. Soon after receiving his Ph.D., Herskovits was denied the right to sublet Margaret Mead's New York City apartment for the summer and, in the late 1920s, when he was first seeking a permanent university job, such institutions as Yale, Princeton, Chicago, and Johns Hopkins had but one Jewish faculty member each. He leads readers through MJH's early development as an anthropologist, including the very real complexities and subtleties of the Boasian attack on scientific racism, which preoccupied Herskovits, in part through his anthropometry studies in Harlem, for much of the 1920s, when the stakes of the research outcome were particularly high both nationally and internationally. He then devotes a chapter, which has rather less that is new for Caribbeanists, to the New World fieldwork that shaped MJH's life-long diasporic project. The following chapter on the (Myrdal-led) Carnegie Corporation project and *The Myth of the Negro Past* repeats an oft-told story but, in its descriptions of power plays within the highly-charged arena of academic (and foundation-world) politics concerning "Negro Studies," adds telling details about Herskovits's not always admirable personality and modus operandi. Nevertheless, Herskovits's humanistic crusading shines through – his belief that a demonstration of a robust Negro past (no matter how much contested by scholars black and white) would help redeem African Americans from their oppressed condition. Gershenhorn makes it clear that this scholar who so often flaunted his scientific objectivity (and was frequently pig-headed in defending his positions) was also driven by deep political and moral concerns – and that this contradiction or tension ran throughout his life and works.

Much of the book deals with developments during and after World War II, when MJH turned his attentions largely to African studies where, as part of the cold-war-inspired area studies programs, the money was. MJH is shown trying to maintain the monopolistic position within the academy of his own African Studies Program at Northwestern University and, on a national level, acting as gate-keeper for grants and promotions in African studies, through his positions and special contacts with the ACLS, the Ford Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation. During the final years of his life, he was also active as an advisor to the U.S. government on its Africa policy, though the government's cold-war concerns generally prevailed over his advice to give Africans a greater voice in determining their own affairs.

Gershenhorn offers interesting insights into MJH's complicated and sometimes contradictory relationships with African American scholars, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, E. Franklin Frazier, and Lorenzo D.



Turner, some of whom he undermined in what sound like devious ways, and others whom he, when it suited his interests, supported. The tension between scientific objectivism (which he insisted was the only proper stance for professional anthropology) and activist intervention or reformism (which, like Boas, he often espoused in his non-professional ["popular"] writings) was never completely resolved, and it caused Herskovits problems throughout his career, particularly with African American scholars who did not have the privilege that he did to write dispassionately about such subjects as "race." (But as Gershenhorn shows, MJH "wanted to have it both ways" on many subjects.)

This biography, the fullest we have to date on Herskovits, shows him as a complicated, driven man – irascible, manipulative, arrogant, very much a man with a mission, but also a staunch defender of cultural relativism and tolerance. His struggles, both internal and in public, between the importance of cultural particularism or pluralism (the recognition and celebration of cultural difference) and universal values of tolerance were never resolved and Gershenhorn nicely describes many of the contexts in which they played themselves out. In the end, Herskovits's controversial memo written on behalf of the American Anthropological Association to Eleanor Roosevelt, chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, helped to establish the guarantee of "the right of men to live in terms of their own traditions" (pp. 209-11), but the Universal Declaration of Human Rights also proclaimed a series of universal values (concerning, for example, racial, gender, and religious equality) that Herskovits did not believe were appropriate to impose cross-culturally.

In the highly charged world of twentieth-century race politics, Herskovits was a lightning rod for students and colleagues. Some African American colleagues accused him of exclusionary practices (St. Clair Drake is quoted as saying that MJH "never attempted to recruit and train Afro-Americans" [p. 198] and that he "avoided accepting black students for serious anthropological training" [p. 138]), while others depict him as having been supportive and encouraging (Johnnetta B. Cole, who took her Ph.D. with him, said "Herskovits had two special places in his heart: one for students who were African American, and another for students who were women" [p. 139]). On this score, Gershenhorn's evidence – to his credit, like so much else in the book – is equivocal and complicating: what from one perspective looked like exclusion on racial grounds might be interpreted from another as a power play to protect home turf.

There's one unexpected and revealing moment captured in a Chicago newspaper clipping, quoted by Gershenhorn, describing Herskovits combining with his student Katherine Dunham after her return from Haiti in 1936. It's a gem worth quoting for fellow Caribbeanists:



The professor dropped to his knees. He brought the heel of his palm down rhythmically upon the cowhide drumhead. With the drumstick grasped in his other hand he beat a tattoo on the blue and white cylindrical frame of the drum. The hunsí (priestess) began to dance.

"Damballa," she murmured.

At the word, the professor changed his tempo. The dancer's shoulders twitched in slow rhythm, gradually accelerating with the drum. The selected audience drew in its breath.

This was the Haitian ceremonial dance for Damballa, voodoo snake-spirit. (p. 140)

Herskovits is a sufficiently central, and polarizing figure in Afro-American/African studies to deserve several such books, written from different perspectives, on his life and work. We can be grateful to Jerry Gershenhorn for having cleared a path that others can more easily follow.

*Ruth Landes: A Life in Anthropology*. SALLY COOPER COLE. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. xvi + 300 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

OLÍVIA MARIA GOMES DA CUNHA  
Department of Cultural Anthropology  
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
<olivia-cunha@uol.com.br>

Transformations, debates, clashes, professional challenges, and personal disputes in the intellectual field have provided the backdrop for explanations and interpretations of countless lives. It has been a long time since the intellectual field stopped being seen as a path marked merely by professional obstacles and missteps. Other stories of anthropology and of anthropologists were also being told and in this way provided a place for biographical elements. Biography and historiographical and anthropological projects were mingled with more recent experiences, highlighting the impossibility of differentiating between art and life, or of giving meaning and interpreting lives. This cross-cutting of territories has resulted in intense and innovative experiences.

At other times, a kind of double emulation marks the path between the singularity of individuals and the disciplinary styles that transformed various anthropologies into authorized discourses. Even while recognizing the tenuous nature of the borders which have been the object of criticism and constant reinterpretation, the superposition of domains seems not to have resolved the

issue. In the end, how is it possible to construct a historical analysis of anthropology through intellectual trajectories? On the one hand, life – unique, and filled with all kinds of personal contingencies – involves a broader field of political disputes. On the other hand, the authorized/authoritative discourse of the discipline produced by its practitioners is lost in the entangled realm of subjectivity. In *Ruth Landes: A Life in Anthropology*, anthropologist Sally Cole ventures through personal and professional domains in treating the life of another anthropologist, Ruth Landes (1908-92), as material for reflection on the feminine experience within the (un)disciplinary field.

Drawn from personal archives and diaries, this biography reveals aspects little known about the intellectual career and personal life of a figure nearly forgotten in the history of North American anthropology; little known, that is, until the 1970s, when feminist criticism appeared for the first time, under the leadership of the “founding mothers” of the discipline. In the academic field and in the midst of other equally idiosyncratic intellectual trajectories – as in the case of Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Zora Neale Hurston – Landes’s production appears blurred, restricted, and to a certain extent subject to a certain moral evaluation. The image of a “steadfast companion” illuminates Cole’s analysis. But this work also stems from the imaginary of U.S. feminist anthropology dating from the 1970s – specifically, the controversial field experience of Ruth Landes in Brazil during the 1930s. This involved an explosive combination of extremely human qualities and, of course, doses of intellectual politics in both Brazil and the United States: intrigues, jealousies, and personal conflicts, mixed with sexism. It is within this realm, a subtext of the discipline, that, unfortunately, Landes turned into a personality. Rich in analytical possibilities, her experience became the essence of a powerful tale for an important generation of feminist anthropologists.

The organization of the chapters, themes, and personalities and the chronology of Cole’s book suggest a crescendo of situations and experiences whose apex and climax, which gave feeling and singularity, not only to the life and career of the anthropologist, but to her biography, were her field research and later ethnography of Brazil. The centrality of this set of events – the transformation of Landes from an “unconventional participant observer” (p. ix) in the words of the preface – appears both on the book flap and in the preface. This portrait filled with intrigue, slander, and disputes that explain that the exile and ostracism of Landes that followed in the 1950s is perhaps not the most carefully worked element of this biography.

Cole begins her narrative showing how initially a puzzling array of images, stories, and gossip surrounding Landes as emeritus professor in the Department of Anthropology at McMaster University suggested the uniqueness of her position in the modern Boasian tradition of North American anthropology. But her desire to seek a deeper understanding of Landes’s career was related to both the marginal place of the anthropologist and to the central questions

of Cole's generation. Cole writes, "I could not have been more misguided in imagining Ruth Landes as a role model, but the process of discovering this has itself helped me to structure and discover my own anthropological career during the past decade. In unexpected ways she has proven herself a steadfast companion. She has greatly shaped the architecture of my life, perhaps as much or more than I have shaped hers in the pages that follow" (p. 3).

Cole shows us that from her early years at Columbia University followed by her first experience at field research among Native Americans, until the period when she lived in Brazil, Landes carried out pioneering studies and published ethnographic books refined with the disciplinary canon of her times. A good student, she followed the teachings of Boas and Benedict, always with a subjective eye, perceptive to the experiences, world visions, and perspectives of women attuned to the social construction of differences in gender. Cole's work becomes richer when she analyzes Landes's early research among the Ojibwa, Chippewa, and Pottawatomie in the 1930s, which combined the extensive use of "life histories" with a modern feminine sensibility that came from the artistic, political, and intellectual context of the Jewish immigrant community in New York during the 1920s. The entire second part of the book is a valuable contribution to the history of the discipline, revealing Cole's astute attention to the day-to-day experience in the field, the formulation of an "implicit" theory of culture from a female point of view, and the relationships between Landes and her informants, professors (above all Benedict), and representatives of the public sector.

This biography can be read as feminist history of North American anthropology from the point of view of a generation of women anthropologists. Cole follows creatively her comment in the introduction that "the lives may not be lives to emulate, but they are lives to learn from" (p. 11). What should we learn from this? As a "cautionary tale" the book helps us reflect on the exercise of emulation which launches different generations of anthropologists into producing histories of the discipline.

*Central Africa in the Caribbean: Transcending Time, Transforming Cultures.*  
MAUREEN WARNER-LEWIS. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press,  
2003. xxxvi + 391 pp. (Paper US\$ 45.00)

ROBERT W. SLENES  
Department of History  
Universidade Estadual de Campinas  
13081-970 Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil  
<rwslenes@hotmail.com>

This interdisciplinary study has much to recommend it. It provides a useful survey of the substantial literature now available, but often not readily accessible, concerning the impact of western Central African culture on “the islands of the Caribbean Sea and circum-Caribbean areas in Central and South America” (p. xix). It also advances scholarship by a critical examination of recent monographs across the growing subfields of English, French, and Spanish Caribbean studies. Warner-Lewis is in a privileged position to take this comparative approach, for she has done original oral-history research on Jamaica and Cuba as well as on her primary area of study, Trinidad and Tobago.

In her introduction, Warner-Lewis criticizes what she sees as the persistence, especially within the English and French Caribbean, of the idea that African cultures were diverse in the extreme, and that this, together with the conditions imposed by the slave-trade/plantation system, made the perdurance in the New World of specific cultures impossible. Instead, she reaffirms the concept of African culture zones, indeed of even broader commonalities among the enslaved, and stresses continuities across the Middle Passage, including the ability of many Africans initially to reconstruct their original speech communities. Continuity was particularly strong, in Warner-Lewis’s view, in “private/personal” micro-institutions: such things as “songs, games, proverbs, [and] cooking methodologies” (p. xxviii). Thus, she sees individual and group creativity in the formation of “creole cultures” (among Africans and between Africans and Europeans) as conditioned by the continued presence of particularistic heritages, as well as by strong possibilities of dialogue between Africans from a given culture area, or even from different ones. On the question of African continuities Warner-Lewis takes issue with Sidney Mintz and Richard Price (1992) but perhaps discards too readily the possibility that the model of historical change that they propose could be adapted to her purposes.

Warner-Lewis’s sources are published materials from observers of the Caribbean since 1500 and interviews conducted with “associates and descendants of Central Africans” (p. xix). She analyzes these materials in the light of

the bibliography on west Central Africa (seen as a culture area), particularly travelers' and missionaries' accounts and modern anthropological studies regarding the Kongo, Mbundu, and Ovimbundu peoples of the lower Zaire basin and western Angola.

The book is organized topically, opening with chapters entitled "West Central Africa after European Contact" and "Experiences of Enslavement" (in Africa). Discussions follow on the remaking of ethnicity in the New World, on economic skills and domestic activity, and on social etiquette and rites of child-birth, marriage, and death. Two chapters then focus on religion, one dealing with the spirit world, priests, and ritual practices/icons, the other examining the contact with Christianity (within Catholicism, in the Antonian Movement in eighteenth-century Kongo, and in Jamaican Mayaal). The analysis then turns to ritual war and masquerade (stick-fighting) and games, dance, and music. Two chapters are devoted to linguistic topics: one on folktales, songs, insults, aphorisms, and the syntax of speech that incorporates Central African words and phrases; the other on language transmission and lexicons of Bantu origin. The conclusion returns to major questions raised in the introduction, but shifts the emphasis somewhat from continuity (the "transcending time" of the subtitle) toward change ("transforming cultures"). The book includes numerous maps, photographs, and drawings, as well as musical notation reproducing the melodies and rhythms of songs obtained from interviews.

In discussing her approach, Warner-Lewis notes that "form [similarities across societies in vocabulary, rituals, etc.] is the primary focus" (p. xxxi). While "function" is also examined to some degree, relatively little attention is given to "the processes which ... have accompanied change." The strengths of this approach are evident in the many cases discussed in which there is close correspondence in form and strong reason to suspect historical connection: see, for instance, the argument proposing Kongo origins for the white chalky balls or stones used as charms, as reported in sources on late eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue and Jamaica and on Grenada in 1889 (p. 173). The limitations of the method, however, also stand out, on the few occasions that "process" is examined. For instance, the hypothesis (p. 289) that the practice of inserting Central African words into European-language utterances virtually disappeared in Trinidad because it was not linked historically to an African-derived religious community (whereas it continued in Cuba and eastern Jamaica because it had such ties) points to the possibility of comparative sociohistorical analysis, but is left undeveloped. Still, the hypothesis itself is a valuable result of the cross-society analysis of "form" and is a stimulus to further research.

The book might be faulted for giving insufficient attention to the Spanish Caribbean, while Trinidad and Tobago seems unduly highlighted. For example, a chapter section called "Bantu Lexical Inventories" presents a detailed west Central African word list from Trinidad (pp. 309-12), but makes only

incidental mention of the much more extensive *lengua congo* of Cuba. More than occasionally Warner-Lewis pushes etymological speculation beyond plausible limits, most notably when she suggests (p. 323) that *mulato*, *criollo*, and *zambo* are derived from Central African roots – apparently unaware of the standard (and to this reader more convincing) romance-language origins given by Portuguese and Spanish dictionaries.

Despite these caveats, this study is an important contribution toward the identification of “themes and variations” from west Central African culture within the Caribbean. As such, it helps lay the foundation for further comparative work on historical change.

#### REFERENCE

MINTZ, SIDNEY W. & RICHARD PRICE, 1992. *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective*. Boston: Beacon Press. [Orig. 1976.]

*Facing up to the Past: Perspectives on the Commemoration of Slavery from Africa, the Americas and Europe*. GERT OOSTINDIE (ed.). Kingston: Ian Randle, 2001. 150 pp. (Paper US\$ 22.95)

GAD HEUMAN

Department of History

University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 7AL, U.K.

<g.j.heuman@warwick.ac.uk>

Commemorations of slavery and the slave trade have varied considerably. In the United States, a country that received only about five percent of the slaves sent to the New World, a significant number of museums, monuments, and programs have been devoted to slavery. In the past decade, there have also been several new museums or galleries in Britain commemorating the slave trade and slavery. But, as Gert Oostindie notes in the introduction to this book, the Netherlands has been slow to acknowledge that “the slave trade and slavery are part of Dutch history” (p. 14). *Facing up to the Past* therefore developed initially as a project designed to encourage the Dutch to recognize their involvement in slavery. This book grew out of that project and is intended to stimulate debate on the commemoration of slavery more generally.

Handsomely produced with a rich array of images and illustrations, the book is divided into three sections: Africa, the Americas, and Europe. Apart from the editor's introduction, there are twenty-one contributors, most of whom are academics, but there are also writers as well as a specialist on issues of ethics and museums. The chapters are generally brief and inevitably vary in quality. But many are thoughtful and reflect an engagement with this important subject.

One of the most striking images in the section on Africa is the overwhelming silence on the subject of slavery. Achille Mbembe, a historian from Cameroon now based in South Africa, regards slavery and the slave trade as the great unspoken subject in Africa itself. Moreover, Mbembe raises the problem of the refusal of Africans to face their own part in the slave trade. As Ama Ata Aidoo, a Ghanaian writer and professor of literature, makes clear, the situation in Ghana was similar when she was growing up there. Despite the importance of the slave trade, no one in Ghana talked about it. The forts on the coast of Ghana are stark reminders of the brutality of the trade and, as Aidoo points out, reflect the misery of the slave trade.

In South Africa and Mauritius, the memory of slavery raises different issues. Nigel Worden, a historian at the University of Cape Town, highlights the importance of slavery, especially in the Cape, where slaves were the predominant labor force in the colony. But Worden also raises the definitional issue of what should be included when discussing slavery. Do indentured labor, forced migration, and convict and farm labor come under this rubric? In the case of South Africa, as he and Carl Niehaus suggest, the critical issue is apartheid, not slavery. For Mauritius, there is an additional problem caused by the importation of large numbers of laborers from India after the abolition of slavery: the descendants of slaves in Mauritius have expressed the fear of being dominated by the Indian population on the island. Commemoration of the slave past therefore becomes mired in current politics.

In the section on the Americas, there are also some very useful contributions. Richard Price discusses a traveling commemorative exhibit of 150 years of abolition in his village, Anses d'Arlet, in Martinique. Yet as he points out, it contained not a single photograph or engraving relating to slavery in the French Antilles, as if to suggest that slavery happened elsewhere. Moreover, Price reports that many of the locals regard the monuments to slavery there as a waste of money, and some of them feel that slavery should simply be forgotten. For Price, the way forward in commemorating slavery lies less in monuments and more in research and its diffusion. This is also the view of Lowell Fiet, who teaches at the University of Puerto Rico. For Fiet, without more attention to education, statues and monuments will lose their significance.

Writing about Brazil, anthropologist Livio Sansone notes that even with the Afro-Brazilian Museum in Salvador, Bahia, there is a problem of minimizing the significance of slavery. Despite the importance of the slave past



in Brazil, Sansone concludes that there is no proper museum devoted to the subject. As in the case of Martinique, representing slavery has been seen as embarrassing. Olu Oguibe, a specialist on African art and the diaspora, highlights the importance of art in keeping alive the memory of slavery “so that both perpetrator and victim may live in the shadow of its knowledge” (p. 100). Memory for Oguibe should serve as deterrent.

The final section is devoted to Europe, and, inevitably, some of the same themes recur. Although writing about the United States, Allison Blakely, a historian who until recently taught at Howard University, argues the need for an appropriate educational center or museum for the Netherlands. Alex van Stipriaan, who teaches at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam, points to some of the specific difficulties in seeking to commemorate slavery in the Netherlands, including the problem raised elsewhere that many people do not want to be reminded of their country’s involvement in slavery. In Britain, two academics, Harry Goulbourne and James Walvin, discuss Britain’s pride in abolishing slavery but also its failure to take the idea of compensation or reparations seriously.

Overall, then, there are some conflicting messages in this book, reflecting the problem of commemoration and memory more widely. But it is clear that, whether in the form of educational outreach or appropriate monuments and museums, commemoration of slavery is crucial. This very useful book should help to stimulate that discussion and debate.

*Decolonising the Caribbean: Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective.*  
GERT OOSTINDIE & INGE KLINKERS. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003. 291 pp. (Paper € 29.00)

PAUL SUTTON  
Department of Politics and International Studies  
University of Hull  
Hull HU6 7RX, U.K.  
<p.k.sutton@hull.ac.uk>

In December 1954 the *Statuut* (Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands) was promulgated, officially ending the Dutch colonial relationship with the Caribbean and introducing in its place the Kingdom of the Netherlands composed of three equal partners, the Netherlands, Suriname, and the Netherlands Antilles. In the countries concerned and elsewhere, the *Statuut* was welcomed, and in the fifty years since its adoption it has proved remarkably



resilient, remaining essentially unchanged and shaping Dutch policies toward its Caribbean partners and the policies of Suriname (until independence in 1975) and the Netherlands Antilles toward the Netherlands. The continuity of the framework, however, disguises an often acrimonious and difficult relationship among the partners. The history of these differences constitutes the core of this excellent study, which also contains as a bonus brief comparative excursions into the policies of the United Kingdom, France, and the United States toward their remaining "territories" in the region, helping to set the Dutch experience in context.

The study begins with three relatively short chapters examining British, French, and U.S. approaches to decolonization in the region. The arguments advanced are familiar and summarize the existing literature. They do not tell us anything new, but they do serve the important purpose of acting as a backdrop, allowing for the distinctive character of Dutch policy to be examined and comparisons to be made.

The next four chapters examine in detail Dutch policy in the Caribbean since 1940. The wealth of material presented here is about as much as any Caribbeanist is likely to generally need other than those making a special study of the Dutch Caribbean. The authors were given access to confidential Dutch government papers and conducted interviews with many of the most important politicians and officials involved in the relationship in all three parts of the Kingdom. Their principal arguments, which have proved controversial, are that the Dutch sought withdrawal since the Caribbean was of little interest to them, but that the other Kingdom partners only sought greater "autonomy." In the case of Suriname this was not realizable except through a poorly conceived independence, actively promoted by the Dutch and some Surinamese politicians, but resisted by others. In the case of the Netherlands Antilles it led to Aruba's clever negotiation of *status aparte*, which gave Arubans independence from their partners in the Netherlands Antilles but not the Netherlands, while the remaining partners resisted all attempts to weaken what they considered to be the beneficial aspects of the relationship with the Netherlands. In this they largely succeeded, forcing the Dutch (like the British) to eventually conclude that they will remain in the Caribbean for the foreseeable future. The price exacted for doing so, however, is greater oversight by the Dutch of some internal aspects of the governmental processes of the Netherlands Antilles which weaken that "autonomy" but guarantee the "tie."

The evidence presented by Oostindie and Klinkers more than sustains their arguments. What is of particular interest, however, is the way they show policy is made. In the Dutch case it often appears inept, with little evidence of strategic thinking and a great deal of muddling through. Much the same can be said of Suriname. By comparison, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles have a clearer sense of purpose (vision, even, in the case of Aruba) and good judgment about how to exploit the Dutch to achieve their ends. It involves

endless “shadow play,” in which the ability to say “no” wears the Dutch down, allowing the weaker partners in the *Statuut* to largely dictate the terms and emerge “triumphant.” The interesting question that arises from this interpretation is whether it holds elsewhere in the Caribbean. Does Martinique “dictate” to mainland France and Puerto Rico to the United States? In the case of Britain there is some evidence that the Caribbean overseas territories often have the advantage in their relations to Britain, engaging in the same tactics as Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles. The “master-servant” relationship here puts the servant in the driving seat, not least because the servant knows the master so well. The psychological element in decolonization is not one that is often mentioned but can be crucial in determining options – Oostindie and Klinkers quite rightly make it absolutely central to their explanation and in the process alert us to its particular importance in the Caribbean in which mindsets were forged over long years of intimate association.

The final chapters return to the comparative theme. Dutch policies on aid, migration, and culture are examined and compared to Britain, France, and the United States. In these issue areas the Dutch are consistently more generous than the British but less engaged and committed than France or the United States. They are also the issues, particularly migration, where the next “shadow play” determining the limits of “autonomy” between the Netherlands, Aruba, and the Netherlands Antilles is likely to be staged.

Oostindie and Klinkers conclude by pointing to the divergences that have appeared between the sovereign independent Caribbean and the nonsovereign Caribbean, in which the latter gain significant material advantages over the former. This is now widely recognized and is found not only in the Caribbean but in the relations of other small “nonindependent” island economies with their “metropolitan patrons.” These differences between sovereign and non-sovereign countries have two important implications: they effectively rule out any future moves to independence and are significant obstacles to future regional integration. The Caribbean will thus continue to remain divided, as it was in the past, by the present “colonial” powers, and continue to feature on the various metropolitan agendas, demanding attention and commitment from them out of all proportion with their “real” importance.

Caribbeanists are very well served by this book. The “nonsovereign” Caribbean is rarely studied comparatively and contemporary relations in the Dutch Caribbean are often overlooked. There is now no longer reason to do either. This authoritative study of Dutch policy provides a perfect text for students seeking a comprehensive and detailed study of the continuing Dutch presence in the Caribbean, and in the clarity and depth of its scholarship it has much to offer researchers on the region. The task now, as Oostindie and Klinkers mention in passing, is for other Caribbeanists to match their achievement with comparable studies of the relationships of Britain, France, and the United States with their Caribbean territories. In so doing this book serves as an outstanding model.

*Politics in a 'Half-Made Society': Trinidad and Tobago, 1925-2001.* KIRK PETER MEIGHOO. Kingston: Ian Randle; Oxford: James Curry; Princeton NJ: Marcus Wiener, 2003. xxxiv + 446 pp. (Paper € 19.95)

DOUGLAS MIDGETT  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Iowa  
Iowa City IA 52242, U.S.A.  
<douglas-midgett@uiowa.edu>

In the introduction to this volume on Trinidad and Tobago politics, Kirk Peter Meighoo eschews a grounded theoretical treatment, opting instead for an “open-ended, eclectic approach,” one that aims at “thick description” of the political life of the society during the period in question (p. xxii). The study follows this aim in its expansive and descriptive narrative. The introduction also introduces the notion of a “half-made society,” a term coined by V.S. Naipaul to characterize Trinidad and Tobago. Does Meighoo mean for us to take this characterization as a serious frame for his study? Although he discourses on it briefly, he dismisses any more extensive examination of what utility it might have by stating that such further discussion “would detract from the main purpose of the book, which is to examine the politics of a particular society” (p. xxiv). We are thus left with this nebulous concept – no one, including Naipaul, himself, has ever tried to elaborate it – to which Meighoo does not return in the book’s concluding chapter. Meighoo certainly examines the politics of the particular society of Trinidad and Tobago. Although the period covered (as indicated in the subtitle) is 1925 to 2001, the early years are only sketchily addressed. For example, little is made of the 1937 disturbances and the Butler movement, including the rise of trade unionism. Nor is much made of early movements that sought to unite Afro-Trinidadian and Indo-Trinidadian workers. The brevity of Meighoo’s treatment of the early period is perhaps understandable given the extensive examination of these times in the works of Selwyn Ryan, Ivar Oxaal, Rhoda Reddock, and Richard Jacobs.

What seems apparent is that the book’s main concern is with the events and circumstances that led to the ascendance of Basdeo Panday and the United National Congress (UNC) in 1995. Of the 291 pages of text, 77 are given over to a discussion of the UNC government, which held power from 1995 to 2001. Moreover, well over half the book details events occurring after the death of Eric Williams in 1981. This covers a twenty-year period of political upheaval that saw the eclipse of the People’s National Movement (PNM), Williams’s personal political vehicle that ruled Trinidad and Tobago for thirty years, and the emergence and dissolution of the National Alliance for

Reconstruction (NAR), a “rainbow party” that ideally would have united disparate sectoral interests in the state and submerged communal struggles. The latter movement saw the rise to prominence of Panday, who had first made his presence known in the aftermath of the 1970 “Black Power Revolution” and formation of the United Labour Front. During a period of ineffectual PNM government in 1992-95, the UNC and Panday emerged as the opposition and eventual electoral winner in 1995. Although the detail in these latter chapters is extensive, readability is sometimes sacrificed to an overly busy scholarship. The UNC chapter alone contains 397 endnotes, many of them superfluous references to newspaper items about current events.

Another problem of the book is the almost exclusive attention to this society, resulting in insufficient consideration of other regional issues that might have implications for the politics under discussion. For example, there is no mention of Grenada – neither the revolution of 1979, nor the U.S.-sponsored invasion in 1983, when the Trinidad and Tobago government was not privy to the invasion plan. Can it be that these events had no implications for local politics? Are the Cuban experience and the implications of cold-war geopolitics negligible for an understanding of Trinidad and Tobago?

Although he chooses not to ground the analysis in theory, Meighoo engages some theoretical approaches in his criticisms of other writers of the Trinidad and Tobago scene. Selwyn Ryan and Ralph Premdas both come in for critical comment, especially in their attention to ethnic factors in assessing political life in the state. Yet, in his presentation, one cannot help but be aware of the significant role ethnic appeals and affiliations have played, particularly in recent times in electoral politics. The ascendance of an Indian prime minister and the coming to power of an allegedly “Indian” political party have intensified the racialized nature of Trinidad and Tobago political activity and discourse, and Meighoo provides numerous examples of this.

Finally, I suggest that Meighoo has not been well served by his editors. The volume could have used editorial attention to make a more readable text; there is much redundancy; and there are occasional factual errors that should have been remedied. Additionally, despite the very attractive format (including cover art by Christopher Cozier), the overall presentation of the book often leaves something to be desired: the reproduction of photographs and text maps is not good (they are too small and muddled), and the tables, while very useful, especially in Appendix B, should have had more careful editing. For a volume that contains such a richness of factual information, the index is unnecessarily brief and incomplete.

I believe that a final analysis of the worth of this book lies in the exhaustive scholarship that Meighoo has undertaken. Anyone writing of political life in Trinidad and Tobago, especially during the past twenty-five years, should consult this volume for the wealth of information it contains. If the detail sometimes proves tedious, the rewards come from the completeness of its examination of documentary evidence.

*The Culture of Gender and Sexuality in the Caribbean*. LINDEN LEWIS (ed.). Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003. viii + 328 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

DAVID A.B. MURRAY  
Department of Anthropology  
York University  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3  
<damurray@yorku.ca>

In a recent review essay on sexual cultures and the interface of the local/global, Florence Babb (2004:225) notes the simultaneous importance and difficulty of integrating “global” and “local” factors into understanding how contemporary sexual practices, identities, and values are constructed and/or reconfigured around the world. When it comes to the Caribbean, this should be old news. After all, this is a region which was forcibly created through the legacy of the local/global encounter known as colonialism, and as many anthropologists have argued, to understand any social institution or cultural formation in this region always requires multifocal lenses identifying the synergies of various levels of local practices as they intersect with macroflows of capital, ideologies, and human traffic that traverse national boundaries (see Slocum and Thomas 2003 for a good summary of this position). However, as Linden Lewis, editor of *The Culture of Gender and Sexuality in the Caribbean*, notes in his introduction, sexuality and certain aspects of gender have only received cursory attention in Caribbean studies, resulting in rather static, overly determined representations of this important aspect of sociocultural life.

The collection of essays in this volume, we are told, will “break new ground in exploring issues of gender and sexuality” on a number of fronts: first, it will bring sexuality into the analytical foreground with gender and culture (something which has not occurred in Caribbean studies), putting the concepts into a productive dialogue in heretofore understudied terrains such as masculinity and popular culture (p. 3); second, it will foreground the importance of understanding these concepts across the region and the wider Caribbean diaspora (thus addressing Babb’s concern with sexuality and the local/global interface noted above) (p. 19); and third, it will begin to bridge the gap between “socially acceptable” and “peripheral” behaviors and practices in the Caribbean, thus addressing areas of inquiry that have long been ignored in the scholarly literature of the Caribbean (p. 19). This is a difficult and challenging set of objectives, and while Lewis’s collection does not fulfill all of them, it succeeds in making important analytical inroads to an important and understudied facet of Caribbean social life.

The volume is divided into four loosely themed sections, beginning with "Theoretical Mediations on Gender in the Caribbean." The opening chapters by Eudine Barriteau and Hilbourne Watson offer contrasting approaches to the significance of gender and its place in Caribbean social analysis, representing "postmodern feminist" versus more traditional Marxist perspectives, respectively. Both of these authors criticize the way in which gender has, until recently, mostly stood for "women," but it is Lewis's chapter that charts in detail the ways in which masculinity has been analyzed in Caribbean social research. While each of these chapters discusses how sex and sexuality are ideologically, economically, and/or politically deployed to privilege certain interests in the Caribbean, this section as a whole prioritizes gender over sexuality in terms of critical theorizing.

The second section, "The Political Terrain of Gender and Sexuality," does a better job of integrating gender and sexuality as mutually structuring themes. Patricia Mohammed explores the gendered aesthetics of Trinidadian calypsos in the 1920s and 1930s, noting how certain ideas/ideals of gendered and sexual behavior (as well as ethnic and racial types) became mythologized through this form of popular culture. Carolle Charles argues through an ethnohistorical framework that among poor and working-class Haitian women's discourses on gender and sexuality, the body is represented as a capital resource – sex is most often considered as work, through which certain benefits may be accrued which may lead to greater economic gain. Charles emphasizes throughout her chapter the influence of rigid class and color hierarchies in Haitian sexual relations. In the final chapter of this section, Elizabeth Crespo-Kebler shows how the Puerto Rican Penal Code reinforces a heterosexual normative structure which silences female sexuality. She then outlines how women have reinvented and renamed outlawed and/or unnamed sexualities in "private" spaces.

The third section, "Sexual Orientation and Male Socialization in the Caribbean," contains three chapters exploring various aspects of masculinity, beginning with Barry Chevannes's description of "the street" (public spaces) in the socialization of male youth in downtown Kingston, Jamaica. Next is Rafael Ramirez's discussion of the meanings of "macho" in Puerto Rico, and how sexuality and power operate as central structures in this concept. The last chapter in this section, by Conrad James, presents a study of homosexuality in Cuba from a literary perspective, focusing on the fiction of Manuel Granados.

The final section includes two chapters that offer historical analyses of gender and sexuality, the first by Glyne Griffith, who also uses literature (two novels by Hilary McD Beckles and Earl Lovelace) to explore subversions of gender binaries in the Caribbean, and the second by Joseph Dorsey, who explores historical practices of sexual violence and their connection to institutions of patriarchal power in the nineteenth-century Caribbean. I found this historical section to be a strange way to end the volume: why was it not

placed at the beginning so that as we read subsequent chapters, we could see the ways in which the legacies of this history resonate throughout the contemporary Caribbean?

Does this volume succeed in achieving the three main objectives set out in the introduction (and mentioned above)? Yes and no. Overall, these chapters do bring sexuality and gender into an equal and productive dialogue (thus achieving the first objective), and we find a number of them accomplishing important firsts in Caribbean social analysis through sustained and rigorous inquiry into what are often dismissed as “peripheral” gendered and sexual identities (the third objective). However, the volume falls short in relation to the second objective, to foreground the importance of understanding these concepts across the region and the wider Caribbean diaspora.

Although this is not directly addressed by any of the authors, the overall effect of the chapters is to imply general contours of cultural similarities throughout the Caribbean in relation to gender socialization, proper and improper sexualities, and the ongoing centrality of raced and classed hierarchies. Some discussion of these general similarities (and differences) would have been helpful, not to mention the very important question of the influences of diasporic Caribbean populations in North America and Europe as well as “transnational” discourses of sexual identity in reinforcing or changing ideas of gender and sexuality in the “homelands.” Nevertheless, this volume is most certainly an important, original, and worthy contribution that opens up new directions for further research in sexuality and gender in this region.

#### REFERENCES

- BABB, FLORENCE, 2004. Incitements to Desire: Sexual Cultures and Modernizing Projects. *American Ethnologist* 31:225-30.
- SLOCUM, KARLA & DEBORAH THOMAS, 2003. Rethinking Global and Area Studies: Insights from Caribbeanist Anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 105:553-65.



*The Francophone Caribbean Today: Literature, Language, Culture.* GERTRUDE AUB-BUSCHER & BEVERLY ORMEROD NOAKES (eds.). Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2003. xxiv + 191 pp. (Paper US\$ 25.00)

ELIZABETH WALCOTT-HACKSHAW  
Department of Liberal Arts  
University of the West Indies  
St. Augustine, Trinidad  
<ewalcotthackshaw@fhe.uwi.tt>

One of the most important lessons that can be gleaned from *The Francophone Caribbean Today* takes us back to the old saying, “*plus ça change plus c’est la même chose*.” The editors’ introduction to the collection suggests that many of the concerns from the past continue to haunt the writers and scholars of the region today. Still at stake, particularly for the French overseas departments of Martinique and Guadeloupe, is the looming question of cultural identity, although the editors argue that, unlike the early *Négritude* movement, this issue is “no longer addressed through race alone” (p. viii). Branching out from this central concern are the many ways in which writers have dealt with the question of official History through narratives that emphasize plurality of voice. Another link to the past is the persistent interrogation into the place and role of the Creole language in Francophone Caribbean cultural expression. Several of the essays frame their concerns using the *créolité* movement or Creole as their point of reference or departure. In fact the collection is most useful for those still preoccupied by what the editors claim to be “the most prominent literary movement in the French Caribbean at the turn of the century” (p. xi).

In the first chapter, “Linguistic Paradoxes: French and Creole in the West Indian DOM at the Turn of the Century,” Aub-Buscher effectively exposes the problems involved in trying to halt a process of decreolization and at the same time resuscitate a “true Creole” derived from neologisms. “Creole in the French Caribbean Novel in the 1990s: From Reality to Myth?” by Marie-Christine Hazaël-Massieux then offers a panoramic view of the place of Creole in the contemporary novel in the Lesser Antilles. Drawing primarily on the works of Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, champions of the *créolité* movement, Hazaël-Massieux points to a decline in the production of texts written in Creole and asks the important, if obvious, question: “Is there still a place for Creole writers in the Caribbean?” (p. 97). Marie- José N’Zengou-Tayo’s essay, “The Martinican Writers of the Créolité Movement and History,” also examines the works of Chamoiseau and Confiant to show how they have challenged official history and privileged individual narratives.



But is the Francophone Caribbean today still so preoccupied with the *créolité* movement and the manifesto, influenced by Glissant, of *Éloge de la créolité*, which was written over a decade ago? Are there other concerns beyond defining a creole cultural identity? Are third- and fourth-generation writers still concerned with identities rooted in the Caribbean or even in Caribbean culture? Has geography and physical location become secondary to the writer's continual reconstruction of identities located primarily in the imagination?

Some of the essays begin to explore these concerns. Mary Gallagher's "Re-membering Caribbean Childhoods" is one of the most creative treatments that I have seen of the ways in which French Caribbean writers recover childhood experience. The region is rich in autobiographical and first person narratives, but Gallagher adds to the body of knowledge by her selection of two authors from different generations and genres who would seem to have little in common: prose writer Patrick Chamoiseau and poet Saint-John Perse. Sam Haigh, in an intricate but often detoured journey, traces the manner in which different Francophone Caribbean writers, including René Depestre, Frantz Fanon, Edouard Glissant, and Patrick Chamoiseau, have interrogated and redefined notions of exile and *errance*. Haigh focuses on the Montreal- and more recently Miami-based writer Dany Laferrière, who has re-imagined through his provocative and erotic writings the once paralyzing notion of exile. J. Michael Dash's "Postcolonial Eccentricities" traces the demystification of apocalyptic discourse in early Francophone Caribbean writings, drawing primarily on Edouard Glissant's postcolonial readings of language and society. The essay also questions the role of Creole in the Francophone Caribbean as the "true source of cultural authenticity" (p. 39).

There is predictability in the choice of the women writers examined in the three essays from the collection and to some extent in the themes explored. Anthea Morrison's "The Caribbeanness of Haiti" is a detailed study of Simone Schwarz-Bart's *Ton beau capitaine* that attempts to uncover Haiti's place in the Caribbean psyche and show how "the Haitian experience remains quintessentially Caribbean" (p. 116). Carol Sanders frames her exploration of polyphony in Maryse Condé's *La Migration des coeurs* with an interrogation into Bakhtine's concept of plurality of consciousness. The third essay that focuses on a Francophone women writer is by Ormerod Noakes, who tackles the theme of early childhood trauma and its imprisoning effects on adulthood in the works of Gisèle Pineau.

The collection is dedicated to the memory of Bridget Jones and also includes an essay by Jones herself, comparing Zobel's *La Rue cases-nègres* with Euzhan Palzy's interpretation on film of this classic Caribbean tale. The biographical and academic information provided on this important Caribbean scholar is a welcome addition to the text.

A haunting short story by Priska Degras ends the collection. Although readers may presume to make links between Degras's "Leur seule visite" and the themes explored in the various essays, the editors provide no explicit reason for this selection. Is it representative of Francophone Caribbean writing today? Unfortunately this question and others remain for the most part unanswered, although the linguistic and cultural uncertainties presented in the collection correctly point to the futility of a search for a fixed definition of Francophone Caribbean identity. The collection as a whole would have benefited from a less Creole-centric focus particularly since the movement has already been placed under such scrutiny and self-examination. Perhaps some disillusionment also lies in the expectations raised by a title that does not recognize how quickly our today becomes our yesterday.

*Gender, Ethnicity and the Informal Sector in Trinidad.* SALLY LLOYD-EVANS & ROBERT B. POTTER. Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2002. xiv + 300 pp. (Cloth US\$ 79.95)

KATHERINE E. BROWNE  
Department of Anthropology  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins CO 80523-1787, U.S.A.  
<kate.browne@colostate.edu>

In this monograph, Sally Lloyd-Evans and Robert Potter enter a discussion that has energized development planners since the early 1970s: how people who make their living off the books might provide the solution to poverty. That is, many planners believe informal operators can become full-fledged entrepreneurs, ultimately employing others and igniting the engine of economic growth. As social geographers, Lloyd-Evans and Potter use their disciplinary tools to suggest that empowering informal actors will also require considerations of gender, ethnicity, and spatial preferences for worksites.

In the first four chapters, they present their view of the background surrounding the study. First they outline the evolving context of Trinidad and describe how political and economic shifts in the island – such as the short-lived oil boom in the 1980s and oppressive IMF structural adjustment programs in the 1990s – spurred a rise in the island's informal economy. Second, they introduce the rise of interest in the concept of informal economies among development agencies as well as some of the ways that scholars have approached this phenomenon globally and in the Caribbean.

The research findings presented in the next four chapters draw on surveys and in-depth interview data collected in the early 1990s. On three designated roadways, Lloyd-Evans and Potter collected brief survey data from all visible vendors (a total of 740 people). They supplement these data with sixty in-depth interviews conducted with vendors from four urban markets. They then apply their geographic orientation to map the physical distribution of people engaged in informal trade according to their gender, ethnicity, and type of activity.

Results of this study will not surprise scholars of Trinidad. According to the authors, Afro-Trinidadians tend to shun agricultural work and are, therefore, more likely to cluster their economic activities in urban areas. By contrast, Indo-Trinidadians dominate agricultural occupations and live and sell their produce in rural areas. These patterns are discussed in fine detail. For example, the study shows that food vendors dominate street vending (80 percent) and that the majority of these vendors are East Indian men operating stalls in rural sections of highways. Usually, the produce they sell is grown and prepared by other members of their extended family and their wives sometimes help out in retailing.

By contrast, Afro-Trinidadian female “higglers” sell food items in similar areas, but as solo operators, without the same family networks, product diversity, or permanent stalls. Of those street traders who do not sell food, Afro-Trinidadian women dominate, selling clothing, cosmetics, newspapers, and lottery tickets from “safe and peaceful” outer-urban spaces. Meanwhile, Afro-Trinidadian men have become the primary “suitcase traders,” traveling to the United States or Caracas to smuggle in foreign consumer goods that they resell in urban centers.

These spatial and occupational patterns are descriptively clear and provide a useful window on the distribution of informal operators. The authors then attempt to press this straightforward material into the service of their primary ambition: to lay out the nature of social factors that exert an impact on an informal operator’s potential for upward mobility. It is in this effort to extend their findings into analytical grist for the benefit of development planners that the reader might wish for more clarity, and perhaps more rigor, in the analysis. For, while we see a vendor’s choice of activity, product, and location, Lloyd-Evans and Potter do not discuss the processes that could have led to these outcomes. They argue, for example, that Indo-Trinidadians are family-oriented entrepreneurs, better positioned to grow economically than solo-operating Afro-Trinidadians. However, readers might wonder whether the “success” or greater economic potential of a given vending operation is reliably evaluated through the presence of more permanent stalls, more product diversity, more familial involvement, or a pricier home address. Are more heavily capitalized operations or more affluent homes the result of the vending operation profits? At the very least, one is left to question what processes

have led to the appearance of successful outcomes. Since we are offered no data on income, economic activities of other household members, inherited wealth, or number of people a vendor's income must support, it is hard to fully accept the conclusions.

One possible explanation for the conflation of outcomes and processes appears in the early chapters where the authors propose their own, four-part schema to describe the informal "sector": subsistence operators, small-scale entrepreneurs, petty capitalists, and criminal operators. Of primary importance in their typology is the distinction of activities that are "profit-driven" versus those that are simply "subsistence-oriented." If certain features of an economic activity can distinguish whether a vendor is interested in profit or in survival, isolating those with an entrepreneurial orientation would seem relatively easy. To this end, the authors collect data on an operator's vending location, the scale of the operation, and the degree to which networks of family or friends are involved. But do these features of an activity tell us whether a vendor is profit oriented or not? Are small-scale, solo operators who are located in poor market areas simply not interested in profit? It appears that respondents were not asked whether they felt ambitious, whether they were interested in making money, or how they came to choose where or with whom they worked. These sorts of links might help provide vital insights into the complexity that is missing when a person's goals are assumed rather than investigated.

Readers may encounter a variety of smaller frustrations, including, for example, largely out-of-date literature reviews and very few works by anthropologists or sociologists whose studies are of primary relevance to the concerns of ethnicity, gender, and informal economies. The publisher has done the authors no favors, as there are numerous repetitions of text as well as typographic errors.

The book's primary value involves its insights into Trinidad's spatial and occupational distribution of informal vending by gender and ethnicity. Beyond this, there are basic questions that the study might have benefited by asking. Addressing some of these questions could have made this research and its import a good deal more compelling.

*Banana Wars: Power, Production and History in the Americas.* STEVE STRIFFLER & MARK MOBERG (eds.). Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003. x + 366 pp. (Paper US\$ 22.95)

PETER CLEGG  
School of Politics  
University of the West of England, Bristol  
Bristol BS16 1QY, U.K.  
<Peter.Clegg@uwe.ac.uk>

Issues surrounding the international banana trade have entered the public's consciousness over the last decade via the long-running United States-European Union banana-trade war. *Banana Wars* makes reference to the "war" of the 1990s, but is primarily concerned with the complex and sometimes violent nature of the banana industry in the Americas over the last century, and how it has shaped regional and international social, cultural, economic, and political processes and experiences. The volume has its origins in a panel at the 1998 meeting of the American Anthropological Association, and incorporates essays of historical and social scientific interest. The book is prefaced with an introduction by the editors, and then is divided into three sections: "A Global Fruit," "Central and South America," and "The Caribbean," which also includes a conclusion by Allen Wells entitled "Dialectical Bananas." The central organizing themes are power, resistance, and ethnicity, and although a majority of the contributors provide a coherent and detailed exposition of the banana trade in the Americas over the last century, a number lack rigor and focus in their analyses.

The most successful part is the second section, which considers the complex nature of the banana industry's development in Central and South America using a case-study approach. The essay by Mark Moberg provides an interesting account of the involvement of the United Fruit Company (UFC) in Belize during the first decades of the twentieth century, highlighting in particular the supine and acquiescent role of the British colonial government in attempting to attract foreign capital to support the country's embryonic banana industry. The next contribution, by Steve Striffler, examines the role played by the peasantry and labor in Ecuador in challenging the power and authority of the UFC in the country, which by the early 1960s had led to the company withdrawing from direct production and the establishment of a system of contract farming. The penultimate essay in the section, by Cindy Forster, offers an excellent account of the role of plantation workers in defying UFC power in Guatemala, which subsequently precipitated the violent U.S.-backed coup of 1954. Moberg, Striffler, and Forster provide insightful

and lucid illustrations of the diverse nature of the banana industry in Latin America and the complex set of interactions that underpin production in particular countries in the region. However, the section on Central and South America is book-ended by two essays that do not entirely convince. The first contribution, from Philippe Bourgois, uses documents, letters, and photographs to evaluate the UFC's corporate mindset at various times during the twentieth century, but the lack of judicious editing of the material creates a rather ill-focused account. And the concluding essay in the section, by Dario A. Euraque, which considers the tensions within the Honduran banana economy between mestizos and blacks in the 1920s and 1930s, is undermined by a shortage of convincing quantitative evidence.

The two remaining parts of the volume are less substantial, but nevertheless contain important analysis and insight. The first segment includes three contributions providing a broader view of the banana industry as a whole. The opening essay, by Laura T. Reynolds, considers the background to, and subsequent settlement of, the recent banana-trade dispute between the United States and the European Union. Reynolds includes a brief history of the U.S. and European banana trades, an assessment of the regulatory, economic, and social differences between the dollar banana system, and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) banana system, and the potential options for ACP bananas in the aftermath of the injurious rulings by the World Trade Organization. Her essay sets the scene for the contributions to come, but readers who seek a more comprehensive analysis of the banana dispute will need to look elsewhere. The next essay, by John Soluri, focuses on the dialectical relationship between banana production and consumption, incorporating a particularly interesting account of the banana's cultural significance within U.S. society. The final contribution of the section, by Marcelo Bucheli, provides a more general account of the internal workings, strategies, and decision-making processes of the UFC than the one by Bourgois. However, the value of Bucheli's contribution is limited by the fact that the story is told predominately through official and publicly available UFC documents, thus creating a rather one-sided view of the company's activities.

The final and shortest section of the volume focuses on the Caribbean. The first essay by Karla Slocum considers a counter-discourse to the perceived primacy of globalization in undermining St. Lucia's banana industry during the 1990s. Slocum focuses rather on the alleged mismanagement of the industry by the St. Lucian government and the state-run Banana Growers' Association (BGA), as well as the efforts of small farmers, through the Banana Salvation Committee (BSC), to challenge existing domestic power structures. However, the essay suffers from its selective use of evidence, and its rather disingenuous tone. In particular, Slocum fails to mention the clear political agenda of the BSC and its attempts to undermine the government of the day, as well as the serious fragmentation of the St. Lucian banana industry

that has occurred since farmers gained greater control over the industry in the late 1990s. The book's last substantive contribution, by Lawrence S. Grossman, which considers the role of the St. Vincent BGA and its relationship to contract farmers, is much more balanced, giving due focus to the important international trading factors that have undermined the position of the Commonwealth Caribbean banana industry over the last decade.

Although the volume does have a number of weaknesses in terms of its academic rigor and intellectual coherence, particularly in the first and third sections, it is recommended for its success in highlighting the diverse nature of the banana trade in the Americas, and the complex and fluid set of relationships that have underpinned the industry over the last century.

*Riches from Atlantic Commerce: Dutch Transatlantic Trade and Shipping, 1585-1817.* JOHANNES POSTMA & VICTOR ENTHOVEN (eds.). Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003. xxviii + 526 pp. (Cloth US\$ 161.00)

GERT J. OOSTINDIE

KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies  
2300 RA Leiden, the Netherlands

<oostindie@kitlv.nl>

"Given its importance at the time," writes John J. McCusker in the foreword to this collection, "too little attention has been paid to the Dutch role in the history of the Western Hemisphere during the early modern era" (p. xx). This statement nicely sums up the assumptions and perhaps frustrations of the book's editors and authors. This voluminous and unfortunately ludicrously priced collection attempts to redress the balance, first by highlighting the role the Dutch played among the European colonial powers in the Americas, and second by re-evaluating the contribution of the Atlantic trade to the Dutch economy.

The volume certainly goes a long way in meeting its first objective. In four sections, the origins and subsequent development of the Dutch exploits in the Atlantic are carefully delineated. Victor Enthoven discusses the first decades of Dutch expansion (1585-1621), part and parcel of the Low Countries' revolt against the Spanish, which in turn led to the Eighty Years War (1568-1648) and the founding of the Dutch republic. Cristopher Ebert focuses, in particular, on the Dutch trade with Brazil in the same period. Henk den Heijer concludes the first section with a thorough contribution on the Dutch West India Company (1621-1791).



In the second section the focus shifts to African commerce and the slave trade. Johannes Postma, who should be credited for having almost single-handedly quantified the Dutch slave trade during a period of almost four decades, offers a scrupulous re-assessment of his earlier calculations. Modestly admitting to some miscalculations in his earlier work, he ends up only marginally revising these figures in an upward direction. His new calculation amounts to just over half a million enslaved Africans carried by the Dutch to the Americas between 1600 and 1803, or 4.6 to 4.7 percent of the overall Atlantic slave trade of eleven million. Henk den Heijer analyzes the West African trade of the West India Company (1674-1740), emphasizing that in terms of value, the commodity trade was of more importance than the slave trade. Stuart Schwartz and Postma focus on the commercial relations between the Dutch and Brazilians on the West African Coast.

In the third and fourth sections, the emphasis is redirected toward the Americas. Wim Klooster discusses the pivotal role of Curaçao as a center of Caribbean transit trade. Han Jordaan provides an informative in-depth analysis of the Curaçao slave trade, including procedures on the island, in the period between 1700 and 1730. Claudia Schurmann contributes a rather anecdotal portrait of Jacob Leisner (1640-91), an American merchant of German origins straddling the margins of mercantilism.

Section Four focuses on the Wild Coast settlements. Harvesting again from his four decades of archival work, Postma quantifies the volume of the trade of Suriname both to the Netherlands and within the Americas, particularly to the Northern colonies. Eric Willem van der Oest gives a summary of the "forgotten colonies" of Essequibo and Demerara. He demonstrates that both colonies, initially exploited from Zeeland, started to develop by the later eighteenth century. During the Napoleonic Wars, Essequibo and Demerara were taken by the British, with neighboring Berbice, to become British Guiana. Remarkably, this fourth section neglects Berbice, an oversight not accounted for by the editors.

The final section provides an overall quantitative assessment. Wim Klooster gives an overview of Dutch trade with the Americas (1600-1800). Based on archival data and much educated guesswork, he estimates that during these two centuries the Dutch share in Europe's Atlantic trade averaged nearly ten percent. Victor Enthoven takes up the challenge of assessing the contribution of the Atlantic trade to the Dutch economy. His major handicap is that an assessment of the value of this trade remains a hazardous guess. Courageously combining bits and pieces of evidence, he nevertheless concludes that the Dutch Atlantic trade was clearly more important than trade with the East Indies, and by 1780 may have amounted to just over twenty percent of all Dutch trade.

*Riches from Atlantic Commerce* deserves praise primarily because it provides a welcome update on Dutch Atlantic history, written by authors who



are all well-versed in the relevant sources and literature. The book thus succeeds in its first objective, the highlighting of the unduly neglected Dutch role in early modern colonialism in the Americas. Perhaps there is not much news in the book for specialists. But then again, partly due to linguistic barriers, few historians outside of the Dutch orbit have more than a superficial knowledge of this episode in history in the first place.

The book also aims at revising the contribution of the Atlantic trade to the Dutch economy and at demonstrating that it was of more significance than the trade with the Dutch East Indies. Whether the book succeeds in this objective remains a matter of dispute. Both in the editors' introduction and the concluding chapter by Enthoven, a convincing point is made with regard to the previous underestimation of the importance of Atlantic trade. The contributions by Klooster, based on his previous publications, and Postma, based on his new databases, confirm this point. However, as long as the question of the profitability of these trades is not taken into account and some of the assumptions made regarding the volume of the Atlantic trade remain rather dubious, the debate on this trade's contribution to the Dutch economy is reopened rather than settled with this book. This, to be sure, would be a commendable result of *Riches from Atlantic Commerce* in the first place.

Finally, a word about what is *not* in this volume. In their introduction, the editors attribute the relative neglect of early West Indian history in Dutch historiography to the fact that the West Indies were fully in the shadow of the Dutch East Indies by the time professional historians began to study colonial history. They plea for a re-assessment not only because of the intrinsic value of setting the record straight, but also by reference to the contemporary interest in West Indian history as a result of the massive Dutch Caribbean migration to the metropolis. The latter point is indeed relevant. Yet for better or for worse, the interests among these Caribbean Dutch and the wider society they live in is hardly geared toward this kind of colonial economic history, in which human beings, and particularly the enslaved Africans who were pivotal in the whole undertaking, rarely figure. This is not to say that this discipline has no merits of its own; it certainly does. But this observation should serve as a caveat against basing claims for research grants on this political argument, as the editors seem to do.

*Volcano in Paradise: Death and Survival on the Caribbean Island of Montserrat*. PHIL DAVISON. London: Methuen, 2003. xi + 320 pp. (Cloth £ 14.99)

BONHAM C. RICHARDSON  
6120 East Territory Avenue  
Tucson AZ 85750, U.S.A.  
<lindabon2@hotmail.com>

It hardly seems possible that Montserrat's recent volcanic eruptions began nearly a decade ago. Steam began venting from the Soufrière Hills in July, 1995, with the first major eruption coming the following month. After subsequent eruptions, the capital town of Plymouth was evacuated early in 1996, and in 1997 most Montserratians were relocated to England and nearby islands. The resident human population has now fallen to roughly 3,000, compared with a pre-eruption populace of 11,000. Today, outside interest in Montserrat focuses on monitoring the volcano's tremors, and several excellent internet websites provide up-to-date pictures, chronologies, and descriptions of the island's volcanic activity; perhaps the best site<sup>1</sup> is maintained by the Montserrat Volcano Observatory, an agency that coordinates the efforts of an international team of geophysicists under the authority of the government of Montserrat.

*Volcano in Paradise* is British correspondent Phil Davison's account of events on Montserrat from mid-1995 until late 2002. The book is based mainly on his "interviews with islanders and others, eyewitness accounts, including my own, and government and scientific accounts" (p. xi). Davison is no ordinary journalist. He has covered natural disasters in Mexico and elsewhere, and he has been a war correspondent for over a decade in the Middle East, including the Gulf War in Kuwait. Davison was wounded while covering the recent conflict in Serbia, and he was awarded Britain's Foreign Correspondent of the Year award in 1991.

By way of introduction, *Volcano in Paradise* emphasizes Montserrat's vulnerability to geophysical cataclysm by describing what the islanders went through when Hurricane Hugo hit them in 1989. An oddly placed chapter ("Furnaces of the Gods") in the middle of the book provides a global overview of volcanoes in history, including those in the Caribbean. A few well-chosen black-and-white photographs in the middle of the book depict the Montserrat landscape and important people in the story. Although the book mentions the dispute and mishandling of posteruption population relocation

1. Montserrat Volcano Observatory: <<http://www.mvo.ms>>.

efforts by the British government, it omits any real discussion of the resulting emigration to England or other places.

The book's strength is its vivid description of Montserrat and the plight of its people amidst the volcanic eruptions. Davison effectively narrates events as seen through the eyes of his interviewees: locals, British administrators, and expatriates alike. His attention to the details of seemingly minor sights and sounds on the ground provide an authenticity that almost transports readers to the slopes of the Soufrière Hills during the mountain's convulsions, while at the same time underscoring larger issues. By mid-1997, for example, the number of feral animals, notably stray dogs, on the island constituted such a problem and menace that "canine mercy flights" for homeless dogs to Florida were instigated by sympathetic American television viewers. These events were occurring in the midst of disputes over the relocation of Montserratian people, provoking a telling local response: "If you're a dog, you get fed properly and taken to Florida ... But we're human beings, and we're black. No visas for us" (p. 200). The book's descriptive highlight is of the pyroclastic volcanic flow of rock, ash, and superheated gases on June 25, 1997, which killed nineteen Montserratians while destroying several villages, a moving narrative that readers will not forget.

The weakness of *Volcano in Paradise* is the absence of reference material of any kind. Acknowledgments and picture credits constitute the entirety of the book's end material which has neither an index nor a bibliography. And while it may appear unfairly critical to judge a journalistic endeavor through academic eyes, one need only to refer to this book's obvious competition, Polly Patullo's *Fire from the Mountain* (2000). Patullo, also a journalist, has written a splendid account of the island's eruption and its consequences, including an initial assessment of the relocation of Montserratians to the United Kingdom. Although Patullo's prose is possibly less colorful than Davison's, she includes a bibliography, glossary, and, at the front, an exceptionally useful chronology beginning with the first mountain rumblings in 1995. It is almost a necessity to have Patullo's chronology at hand while reading Davison's book in order to avoid flipping back through earlier pages to keep track of the sequence and dates of various eruptions and their results.

Critical readers of Davison's book will note annoyances that reduce their confidence in the regional perspective he brings to *Volcano in Paradise*. He correctly observes that the Montserrat eruption was surprising, yet the assertion that in the 1990s "few thought to look at the islands of rum and reggae" (p. xi) for serious volcanic activity is obviously misleading. The reference to Montserrat as a "Crown Colony" perhaps bothers only historically oriented purists. One wonders where Davison found that "possibly two million" people inhabited the Caribbean when Columbus arrived (p. 29). And when readers learn of "the rambling University of the West Indies in Trinidad, the biggest and best learning centre in the Caribbean, the 'Oxbridge' for students

throughout the region” (p. 56), eyebrows will be raised, not least from our colleagues at Mona and Cave Hill.

#### REFERENCE

PATTULLO, POLLY, 2000. *Fire from the Mountain: The Tragedy of Montserrat and the Betrayal of Its People*. London: Constable.

*The Last Days of St. Pierre: The Volcanic Disaster that Claimed Thirty Thousand Lives*. ERNEST ZEBROWSKI, JR. New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002. x + 292 pp. (Cloth US\$ 27.00)

BERNARD MOITT  
History Department  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Richmond VA 23284, U.S.A.  
<bmoitt@vcu.edu>

Just over a century ago, Mount Pelée in Martinique erupted, spewing a billowing mass of hot ash and superheated steam in a pyroclastic surge on the city of St. Pierre, killing almost thirty thousand people while displacing another 50,000. In *The Last Days of St. Pierre*, Ernest Zebrowski, Jr. tells the story of the volcanic eruption of May 8, 1902. In so doing, he highlights “the complex web of human commitment and folly that snared its victims, the passions and pains of those who survived, and the experiences of the contemporary scientists and journalists who sifted through the aftermath” (p. vii). He does so in eighteen chapters (arranged primarily in chronological order of events) and an epilogue, using captains’ logbooks, reports written by engineers on shipping vessels, contemporary eyewitness accounts, stories told by survivors, and stories that circulated after the disaster. These are supplemented by photographs depicting views of St. Pierre before and after the eruption, victims and survivors of the disaster, and scenes of destruction of churches and other institutions. Mindful of the pitfalls of oral data upon which the work relies extensively, Zebrowski adopts a critical approach to the evidence, but is ever conscious of the possibility of lack of authenticity of some accounts. There are no traditional citations in the body of the work, but a useful chapter-by-chapter summary of source material appears in a note section at the end of the book.

Zebrowski's creative reconstruction of the Mount Pelée eruption takes many divergent paths. In the early chapters of the book, he gives a historical overview of volcanic eruptions (in which he displays his knowledge of natural disasters), outlines the geography of the Lesser Antilles, and notes the volcanic origin of several of the islands within this chain. We learn of a history of minor volcanic eruptions on Mount Pelée, as in August 1851, when it expelled ash and generated mudflow. Likewise, the La Soufrière volcano on St. Vincent had similar rumblings in the eighteenth century (p. 14). To be sure, volcanoes are an old phenomenon in the Caribbean, and 1902 is unlikely to be Mount Pelée's last deadly blow.

Could the enormous death toll have been avoided? Zebrowski dedicates a considerable part of his book to political events and maneuvers by French authorities in the months leading up to the eruption that hint at the answer. He shows that officials, though not callous, were largely concerned about maintaining the status quo, and opted for political expediency over the well-being of Martiniquans. Zebrowski demonstrates that there were ample warning signs of a pending eruption. In a letter that Clara Prentiss, wife of the American Consul in St. Pierre, wrote to her sister in Massachusetts – for example, she mentioned that Martiniquans were wearing wet handkerchiefs over their faces to guard against sulphur fumes emitted from Mount Pelée (p. 49). In late April – a time when elections for the French Chamber of Deputies were taking place – Mount Pelée continued to emit intermittent puffs of vapor, covering St. Pierre with ashes. Indeed, letters to newspaper editors in St. Pierre complained about the smell of sulphur. With final balloting set for Sunday, May 11, Governor Louis Mouttet, a young, ambitious Frenchman who held several postings in the French Colonial Service and considered Martinique a plum appointment, had to decide whether to proceed with the elections in the face of growing unease. Regarded as a racist by some, he paid close attention to the views of Andréus Hurard, an influential newspaper editor in St. Pierre, who knew that the Radical Socialists stood to gain from fears of an evacuation, and consequently pursued a strategy designed to “keep St. Pierre's own voters in the city as long as possible” (p. 52). Mouttet too was against evacuation – a position that lead critics to accuse him of criminal negligence (p. 56). Although he informed the colonial ministry in Paris of an eruption that occurred about April 28, he requested no action (p. 57). In the ensuing days as ash continued to fall, Mouttet formed a commission of experts to advise him on safety. Some accused the commission of doing the governor's bidding. And Mayor Rodolphe Fouché's anti-evacuation stance, backed by a well-orchestrated poster campaign assuring people that they were safe in St. Pierre, must only have confirmed their accusations. As desperation set in and inhabitants began to move to Fort-de-France and other areas, Mouttet dispatched the armed forces to prevent the evacuation of St. Pierre (p. 112). On May 5, after attending a meeting of a

scientific commission in St. Pierre, where an evaluation of the situation was made, Mouttet assured a crowd that "they had already seen the worst that could possibly happen" (pp. 119-20). On the morning of May 8, he left St. Pierre for Precheur, about twenty minutes before the eruption.

Readers will find Zebrowski's detailed description of the manner in which victims died and the gruesome scenes of mass cremations revealing about natural disasters. But the search for and retrieval of the remains of a daughter by a father, Signor Paravicino, the Italian consul at Barbados, humanizes the book (p. 193). So does the story of a Martiniquan whose prison cell apparently protected him from the volcano's onslaught (pp. 187-92).

Overall, Zebrowski's story of the Mount Pelée disaster could have been told in far fewer pages, with tighter focus, and much less emphasis on French authorities and European personalities. After all, the thirty thousand or so people who lost their lives were primarily people of African descent, barely a half century out of another tragedy – slavery.

*Grenada: A History of Its People*. BEVERLEY A. STEELE. Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2003. xii + 444 pp. (Paper £ 17.95)

JAY R. MANDLE  
Department of Economics  
Colgate University  
Hamilton NY 13346, U.S.A.  
<jmandle@mail.colgate.edu>

For more than thirty years Jamaican-born Beverley A. Steele has been the representative of the University of the West Indies in Grenada. This book is the product of both her affection for her adopted country and her industriousness as a researcher. She writes that it is "primarily written for the people of Grenada who longed for an easy-to-read overview of the history of their island" (p. xii). To a great extent Steele has succeeded in achieving her objective. Though not as analytic as George Brizan's *Grenada: Island of Conflict*, her book is a comprehensive narrative that extends from the indigenous settlement of the island around 2000 BC to the traumatic experiences Grenadians have endured since independence.

Steele's early chapters on Grenada's Arawakan people and their destruction at the hands of Europeans are particularly vivid. She cites recent archeological studies that suggest the island was the recipient of numerous prehistoric migrations. When Europeans arrived, all of the indigenous people of the

region “bonded together for mutual protection” (p. 15), a collective effort of resistance that ultimately failed. In twenty years their numbers were reduced from an estimated one million to only 60,000, a demographic catastrophe that Steele characterizes as “genocide of the entire indigenous people of the Caribbean by the Europeans” (p. 47).

With the defeat of the Arawakan people, Grenada in 1674 came under French rule and became a slave colony. A 1753 census put the population at 13,432, almost 12,000 of whom were bonded. When Britain took over Grenada in 1763 (a result of its victory in the Seven Years War) a long period of conflict ensued between the new colonial power, intent on anglicizing the island, and the resident French planters who were determined to maintain their way of life, particularly their Catholic religion. A brief interregnum of French rule between 1779 and 1783, during the American war of Independence, was followed by more conflict when the British restored their governance.

In Steele’s chronology, Grenada has experienced three revolutions – all unsuccessful. The first was led by Julien Fédon, the plantation-owning son of a free black mother and French father. His insurrection sought to end slavery, overthrow the British, and redeem the grievances of Grenada’s Roman Catholics. In many ways the chapter on the Fédon revolution is the highlight of Steele’s book. She provides a very detailed and clear account of the military operations that occurred between the outbreak of hostilities in March 1795 and the revolution’s defeat a year later. Of particular importance was the complicated relationship that existed between Fédon and his followers on the one hand and the contemporaneous French Revolution on the other. Though representatives of the latter initially provided assistance to Fédon, they could not bring him under their discipline. The consequence was a split in military operations that goes far to explain why this first Grenadian revolution was defeated.

According to Steele, the next revolution to occur in Grenada was 150 years later with the arrival of Eric Gairy in the country. But of course momentous changes occurred in the meantime, most obviously the abolition of slavery and the development of Grenada’s peasantry. That Steele does not describe these events as revolutionary seems to reflect a conscious judgment. She writes that though Emancipation Day was greeted with jubilation by both slaves and freed colored people, “it would soon become evident that the law that ended slavery did not emancipate the slave” (p. 165). As late as the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Steele writes, “most Grenadians were not only very poor citizens in rural areas, but they were almost completely alienated from the political arena in Grenada” (p. 219).

In accounting for the failure of emancipation to result in real freedom, Steele resurrects an explanation that places more blame on the local planter class than on the colonial power. She tends to depict the British as fair-minded, adjudicating between a politically impotent population on one hand



and a grasping planter class on the other. This framework gives the British far too much credit. The problems it creates are evident in Steele's explanation of Britain's imposing a Crown Colony governing structure on Grenada in 1877, an imposition that dismantled the assembly in which the local planter elite had possessed a political voice. This was done, she writes, because "the British government was uncomfortable with the situation where a small minority made laws for the majority." Yet in her very next sentence Steele undermines the claim of benevolent colonialism when she writes, "Britain was also uncomfortable with the idea of placing the government into the hands of the rising educated coloured people" (p. 222).

More innovative is Steele's discussion of Eric Gairy. She is not blind to the oppression that characterized his rule, especially during the 1970s. But she pays respectful attention to his years as an effective union organizer, particularly with regard to the two-month general strike of 1951. She credits Gairy and his activities with moving Grenada's labor relations from "a semi-feudal symbiotic and paternalistic relationship between the worker and the plantation owner and/or manager to a modern one in which the worker was tied to the estate by negotiated contract" (p. 358).

The third and final revolution of course was that associated with the 1979 coup by the New Jewel Movement (NJM) and its allies. This event still is the subject of intense and emotional debate in Grenada, most recently concerning the fate of the imprisoned perpetrators of the murders of Maurice Bishop and his followers. Steele is hostile to the NJM's Marxism and to the oppression it inflicted on its opponents. She does, however, make a good faith effort at balancing her discussion, acknowledging the advances that were achieved by the Revo in the fields of education, housing, and health care.

But it is to Gairy that she returns at the end. It was his funeral in 1997 that was the "End of the Beginning" of Grenada's history, a history that she hopes will be the prologue to its ultimate achievement of "true independence" (p. 425). If this is indeed to be Grenada's future, Steele's book will have made an important contribution, for she has revealed to its people the obstacles they have confronted in the past.

#### REFERENCE

BRIZAN, GEORGE, 1998. *Grenada: Island of Conflict*. London: MacMillan.



*Mass Media and Foreign Policy: Post-Cold War Crises in the Caribbean.* WALTER C. SODERLUND (ed.). Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003. x + 185 pp. (Cloth US\$ 64.95)

*Bitter Rehearsal: British and American Planning for a Post-War West Indies.* CHARLIE WHITHAM. Westport CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002. xiii + 225 pp. (Cloth US\$ 69.95)

JASON PARKER  
Department of History  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown WV 26506-6303, U.S.A.  
<jason.parker@mail.wvu.edu>

Students of the Caribbean can be said to fall into two fundamental categories: on the one hand, those for whom the region is a unique and precious crossroads of history, demography, and culture, and on the other, those for whom the region is not a one-of-a-kind exception to the broader world scene, but rather a useful microcosm of it. Most specialists on the Caribbean, if asked, would probably self-identify with the “sui generis” school. The remaining scholars would not dispute the unique features of the area. They would, however, contend that the region – home to small, insular, relatively powerless states, whose claim on the interests of more powerful world actors varies greatly over time – is most valuably understood as an historical stage on which those actors play.

The two volumes under review here offer examples of the latter persuasion. *Mass Media and Foreign Policy*, to which Walter Soderlund contributes not only his editing talents but also all or part of all nine chapters, attempts to unify some of his earlier, smaller research projects into a coherent whole. It does so by posing a central question: how did the post-1991 American media interpret and present various Caribbean crises of the 1990s? This question lies at the intersection of two other issues acknowledged by the author-editor. The first is the then-emerging post-cold-war worldview of U.S. foreign policy, after the death of the Soviet-Communist threat. The second is the manner in which U.S. television news analyzed and reported that evolving worldview as it applied, or failed to apply, to a given crisis. In seven case studies touching four areas of the circum-Caribbean, Soderlund seeks to answer his question in a way that adequately addresses both issues.

Soderlund succeeds in ways that audiences in political science and especially journalism departments will probably find useful, but his efforts will be less satisfying to those in the fields of historical and cultural studies. Each case study opens with a capsule history of the crisis in question. This is fol-

lowed by analysis of the news coverage of that crisis on the three major American television networks. The analysis examines the “coding” of various actors and features of the crisis as positive or negative, as well as the sources and interpretive “frames” employed by the networks. Finally, the author(s) draw conclusions about the crisis and the U.S. role therein, media coverage of both, and the relationship in each case of the latter to the former two elements. The roster of case studies includes a chapter on the failed Jamaat-al-Muslimeen coup in Trinidad and Tobago; another on the Zapatista rebellion in Mexico; two chapters on Cuba; and three chapters on Haiti. Political scientists who study these areas will value the light shed on the role of U.S. media in shaping “outsider” reception of and responses to each crisis, and media specialists will appreciate the discrete data Soderlund *et al.* have gleaned from extensive use of the Vanderbilt TV News Archive.

These worthy contributions aside, *Mass Media and Foreign Policy* fails in one key respect. Even as it addresses large and important questions, it falls short of making a compelling case for studying them in the Caribbean laboratory. Soderlund acknowledges as much on the first page of his introduction, noting correctly that except for Cuba, the region “was never a major venue of U.S.-U.S.S.R. confrontation,” even though U.S. policymakers during the cold war were almost paranoiacally attuned to Communist currents there. Soderlund suggests that the Caribbean’s place as what one might call a “non-cold-war” region makes it ideal for the study of a post-cold-war paradigm. But historians at least might be likely to draw the opposite conclusion. If the superpower conflict really did touch the area so lightly, is it a sufficiently representative place for discerning the contours of the postconflict world? The question weighs especially heavily given a contemporary alternative. The Persian Gulf War not only was explicitly said to flesh out the post-cold-war “New World Order”; it also – of special interest to students of mass media – saw the arrival of CNN on the world stage. Soderlund’s research focus and method, on the Caribbean and network-TV news respectively, leads him to take a different approach, one that may reward area specialists but will, alas, only tantalize those seeking answers commensurate in scope with the larger questions he asks.

In *Bitter Rehearsal*, Charlie Whitham finds a better match, although one that carries a cost of its own. Whitham offers an impressively researched study of an overlooked topic: World War II-era Anglo-American cooperation – and competition – in the British West Indies. Scholars have known, at least since William Roger Louis’s magisterial *Imperialism at Bay* three decades ago, of British and American officials’ awareness of this arena as a kind of policy proving-ground. Joint U.S.-U.K. efforts there, most importantly the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission (AACC) and its offshoots such as the West Indian Conferences, were seen at the time as models for postwar collaboration, colonial reform, and potential cooperation in matters of eco-

conomic development. This volume fills out a picture to which other scholars, notably Howard Johnson and Cary Fraser, have previously contributed, and it adds enough depth and breadth to make for a much fuller portrait than had been available.

Whitham argues that wartime Anglo-American collaboration in the Caribbean – forced by events, hindered by interests, and shaped as much by clashes as by concord – presented a microcosm of the postwar intra-alliance clash soon to come. The internal menace to the stability of the then so-called “American Lake” took violent form in the latter half of the 1930s, when labor unrest erupted repeatedly in the West Indian colonies. Almost before that smoke had cleared, the external menace of the Axis further complicated the picture. These added up to a compelling security threat to American interests, one made especially acute by the inability of Britain – technically responsible but practically preoccupied elsewhere – to solve it. The machinery created to address the threat obscured as much as it revealed. On the surface, joint projects such as the AACC bespoke a shared Anglo-American concern with Caribbean reform. Behind the facade, though, conflicting visions of the pace and extent of those goals left the two parties more adversaries than allies. Moreover, Whitham contends that underlying the American vision was the drive to reconstruct the regional economy along advantageous, free-trade, dollar-centric lines. This not only neatly corresponded with American interests, business and otherwise, but also sketched in miniature the U.S. design for the postwar world economy.

Whitham makes much of this commercial impetus of American efforts, and for the most part deservedly so. However, in the final reading this also serves to highlight the cost of his approach. He hits the mark regarding the importance American officials placed on economic reform, and their differences with the British on such topics as the sugar question, industrial modernization, and U.S. access to West Indian markets and resources. But he misses two important dimensions of this American focus. First, the specific kinds of reform U.S. officials sought were indeed economic in nature, but not *only* economic in nature. Battles for concessions in West Indian aviation and mineral development, for example, also spoke directly to American security concerns, not to mere commercial ones alone. Second, Whitham overlooks the extent to which this U.S. prescription harmonized with the expressed interest of West Indians themselves. Popular colonial labor leaders, to mention just one important group, had no desire to be dominated by American capital. It is fair to say, though, that they had even less desire to continue being dominated by an archaic, mercantilist, monocultural economy. They called for development, opportunity, and investment, and recognized the United States as the most likely source for all of the above.

This points to an irony at the core of Whitham’s success: he misses the extent to which official-U.S. and native West Indian interests in reform coin-

cided. In large part this is due to the almost-total absence of contemporary West Indian sources, voices, and perspectives in the book. Research in the documents of interwar and wartime Harlem, for example – to say nothing of digging into Caribbean archives – would have revealed West Indian and African American suspicion of U.S. designs, but also that in many cases their suggestions for specific reforms echoed Washington's fairly cleanly. In fairness to Whitham, the Anglo-American struggle for advantage – not the West Indian one for reform – is his central concern. In accomplishing this mission, he does a great service to scholars of the original “special relationship,” of empire, and of the postwar more generally. It is difficult to envision a more thorough account of the AACC and its handmaidens. Yet within it, the West Indies themselves figure as little more than a chessboard. Students of the region will thus have to wait a bit longer for a fully “international history” of the profound changes in the wartime Caribbean. When that book is written, though, Whitham's *Bitter Rehearsal* will be essential to understanding the contemporary Anglo-American feud in and over the regional crucible.

*Creole Transformation from Slavery to Freedom: Historical Archaeology of the East End Community, St. John, Virgin Islands.* DOUGLAS V. ARMSTRONG. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003. xviii + 385 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

KAREN FOG OLWIG  
Institute of Anthropology  
University of Copenhagen  
1220 Copenhagen K, Denmark  
<karen.fog.olwig@anthro.ku.dk>

Reviewing this book gave me a welcome opportunity to “re-visit” St. John, where I did my doctoral research in 1985 and a brief follow-up twenty years later (Olwig 1985, 1994). It confirmed my view that communities that developed in the periphery of West Indian plantation societies offer rich sites for investigating important sociocultural processes in the transition from slavery to freedom in the Caribbean.

Armstrong describes how the East End area of the island of St. John was settled in the 1750s by whites of modest means who were forced to leave the British Virgin Islands owing to the islands' transition to a sugar-plantation-based economy. In dry East End, marginally suited for plantation agriculture, they established small-scale plantation cultivation on a large tract of land

they held in common, using the few slaves they owned. During the early decades of the nineteenth century, well before the abolition of slavery in 1848, this settlement developed into a colored community consisting of the descendants of the early white planters and the black enslaved population, who made a living on fishing, sailing, and cottage industry, supplemented with subsistence farming. In the early twentieth century the East End community declined rapidly, as increasing numbers moved away for better social and economic opportunities, and by the end of the twentieth century, when Armstrong did his study, it had all but disappeared.

On the basis of careful investigation of several household sites in East End, combined with archival research, Armstrong shows how the early plantation society was characterized by separate living quarters for white planters and black slaves, although the differences between them in terms of material affluence and cultural orientation were much less marked than on the larger Caribbean sugar plantations. He further documents how the social, economic, and ethnic boundaries between the population segments gradually disappeared as the settlement gave up slave-based plantation cultivation and became oriented toward the sea. In the maritime community the most important division was along gender lines. The women maintained the home base in East End, caring for the family, gardening, sewing (later basket weaving), and teaching at the local school, while the men pursued income-generating activities offshore through fishing and sailing.

This East End community, Armstrong maintains, was characterized by “a networked multifocal social structure” (p. 300) involving a multitude of socioeconomic exchanges that created a dense weave of ties between individuals, households, and families within East End and new relations in the various places where East Enders traveled. The concept of “networked multifocality,” though intriguing, remains somewhat elusive. Armstrong operates with several different notions of multifocality, including “networked multifocal social structure” (pp. 14, 300), “multifocal household(s)” (p. 14), “multifocal form of household” (p. 317), “multifocal web of support” (p. 280), and “networked multifocal family structure” (p. 317). He contrasts “the multifocal network” with “the matrifocal family frequently used to characterize St. John and throughout the Caribbean (Olwig 1985; Smith 1956, 1996)” (p. 317), but the distinctions between the two forms of focality, as used in Armstrong’s analysis, remain unclear. A more thorough grounding of the analysis in (Caribbean) family and kinship studies, might have generated a clearer understanding of the nature of “multifocality” in the social structure of the East End community and how it improves our understanding of Caribbean family structure.

Armstrong is keen to depict East End as a community that managed to overcome the boundaries between black and white, and planter and slave, and successfully adopted a “maritime way of life [that] was based upon skill and

knowledge and was less bound to racial or ethnic differentiation than labor-intensive plantation settings" (p. 167). He writes little about the conflicts that this accomplishment may have entailed, perhaps because the nature of the data that he examined did not allow him to explore this aspect of sociocultural processes in East End. He effectively uses the probate records concerning the dividing of William and Catherine Ann Ashton's Estate in 1831-32 to document how, in the course of three generations, a white slave-owning planter family was transformed into a racially mixed family engaged in small farming and sailing, as the colored children that white William Ashton fathered with slave women were freed and given a portion of the family estate, and as William and Catherine's son John Ashton married and had children with a free colored woman (p. 342). Police records that I examined in my research on St. John indicate, however, that this transition was fraught with conflicts that were especially hard on women. An 1826 court case reveals the problems that were caused when Eliza Ashton (William and Catherine Ashton's daughter and John Ashton's sister) became pregnant by a family slave named John. Eliza first attempted, unsuccessfully, to induce an abortion by drinking a brew made out of "Square Whit" and then claimed that the baby was stillborn, and her mother demanded that she throw it into the bush. The Danish government sentenced Eliza to forfeit her property and to live in an institution for immoral women, Catherine to two months' jail, and John, the slave father, to 150 lashes at the whipping post and sale away from the island. Apparently Eliza did not suffer the severe punishment that the Danish authorities meted out to her, because the probate records examined by Armstrong show that she was living in East End when her mother died five years later, and entitled to her share of the inheritance. However, the slave John had been "sold according to the government's orders" (p. 331). This case raises interesting questions concerning not just the relationship between this community and the wider Danish West Indian society, but also the nature of gender relations within the community.

Armstrong interprets the strict division of labor in nineteenth-century East End, where women's lives revolved around the home, as "an expression of personal freedom, liberating them to be in and about their homes and to provide for their families, a choice that was not an option for many women elsewhere on the island" (p. 288). One wonders how he can be so sure of this. And why he is so quick to dismiss Raymond Smith's suggestion, noted briefly on page 288, that women's increasing domesticity in postemancipation society may reflect elements of subordination and control as well as choice.

While the social relations of the East End community may have been rather more complex and contradictory than Armstrong allows for, the study nevertheless offers a careful and much needed study of a marginal community that played a central role in the sociocultural transition of Caribbean societies from slavery to freedom.

## REFERENCES

- OLWIG, KAREN FOG, 1985. *Cultural Adaptation and Resistance on St. John: Three Centuries of Afro-Caribbean Life*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- , 1994. *"The Land is the Heritage": Land and Community on St. John*. Crux Bay, Virgin Islands: St. John Oral History Association.
- SMITH, RAYMOND T., 1956. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- , 1996. *The Matrifocal Family: Power, Pluralism, and Politics*. New York: Routledge.

*Een koloniaal drama: De grote staking van de Marron vrachtaarders, 1921*. H.U.E. THODEN VAN VELZEN. Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers 2003. 123 pp. (Paper € 15.00)

CHRIS DE BEET

Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
University of Amsterdam  
1012 DK Amsterdam, the Netherlands  
<c.debeet@uva.nl>

*Een koloniaal drama* provides the historical background to an incident that occurred in March 1961, just as Thoden van Velzen and W. van Wetering were about to begin fieldwork among the Ndyuka Maroons along the Tapanahoni River in Suriname. The researchers were ready to go off to the field site, but had to stay in town due to social unrest caused by a hunting accident. The victim was the son of Kanape, a prominent Ndyuka who was suspected of being a witch. The accusation was related to a power struggle between Kanape and the paramount chief, Gaanman Akontu Velanti. This struggle was stirred up by the third major party in this story: the representative of the colony, Postholder W.F. van Lier. Van Lier, Kanape, and Akontu Velanti were involved in a complex political game. The case illustrates the impact of local events that took place more than forty years before.

The core of the book is an analysis of materials from archives in The Hague, Paramaribo, and Paris related to a strike by boatmen (*bagasimen*) who were engaged in river transport between the coastal town of Albina and the goldfields of the interior along the Lawa River in 1921. The strike, which lasted for about four months, damaged French/Dutch relations and caused deep cleavages within Ndyuka society.



At the end of the nineteenth century, gold had been discovered in the interior of French Guiana, and goldmining became a booming industry along the Lawa, the river that divided French and Dutch territory. Creoles from various Caribbean islands and from coastal Suriname found employment as gold miners in the placers and Maroons played an important role as freight carriers. Not only Ndyukas, but also Maroons from other groups, found work supplying thousands of men on the gold placers with food and other essentials. The strike took place after the devaluation of the French franc and sharp increases in the price of goods in the shops of Albina, hitting the laborers who were cut off from the outside world and had to survive by using their own provisions combined with hunting and fishing.

Thoden van Velzen, who has maintained an interest in Ndyuka culture and society for over four decades, focuses in this book on a period of social tension that lasted about four months, when Ndyuka and Aluku boatmen were on strike. His approach is a fine example of the extended case method or microhistorical approach. The text provides information on the situation before the strike broke out, details all the intrigues during the strike, and highlights the roles of the players in this political game. The final chapters analyze the consequences of the conflict between boatmen and the colonial government. Thoden van Velzen highlights three players in this colonial drama. The first is W.F. van Lier, the postholder stationed among the Ndyuka who was appointed on instigation of the Surinamese governor, G. Staal. Postholders were originally appointed after the peace treaties to keep an eye on the pacified Maroons. Van Lier was known in Suriname as an expert on the Ndyuka. His lectures and articles in the newspaper *De Surinamer* about the Ndyuka of the upper Marowijne River caught the government's attention, and his proposal for the development of the Ndyuka, which endorsed a renewal of the institution of postholder, was well received by the officials. In light of the new ethical politics the plan was welcomed by Staal, who decided that Van Lier was the best candidate for this position. In 1920 Van Lier took up residence in the Ndyuka area along the Tapanahoni.

The second player was Van Lier's opponent Amaketi, who had been appointed paramount chief of the Ndyuka in 1916. In contrast to his predecessor Oseyse, who had been cooperative with the government, Amaketi belonged to a more conservative contingent of Ndyukas who wanted to defend their more or less autonomous status. The third person was the great priest Kanape, who played a major role. The former Gaanman Oseyse had combined the roles of religious and political leader. After his death Kanape succeeded him as the great priest of the Gaantata cult. Van Lier considered Kanape a personal friend and the ideal person to function as a broker between the government and Ndyuka society. On various occasions he promoted his friend, sometimes by humiliating his opponent Gaanman Akontu Velanti. The consequences of these conflicts lasted many years. When Thoden van



Velzen questioned Ndyuka elders in the early 1960s about Van Lier, he was urged to stop the interrogations by Chief Akontu Velanti.

Although the book is largely based on evidence from the archives, first-hand knowledge of Ndyuka society provides an important foundation for this exercise in close reading. The book is a product of the interplay between ethnographic data and documentary evidence. The discovery of hidden motives reveals a new perspective on the role played by Van Lier, and complements and corrects earlier work by Silvia de Groot. Reading the book one may wonder about the situation of the gold seekers, the victims of the conflict, caught up in the interior trying to survive on wild game and other products of the forest. Little attention is given to the situation of the gold seekers who had to remain in the jungle. Did they stay there as victims of the strike and how did they react when the strike was over? The book is a welcome contribution to the history of the interior of Suriname. I recommend this book to those interested in the history of Suriname, Maroon societies, colonial policy, and social movements. The documents used for this publication can be consulted at <<http://fss.uu.nl/ca/bss.htm/>>.

*Nelson in the Caribbean: The Hero Emerges, 1784-1787.* JOSEPH F. CALLO. Annapolis MD: Naval Institute Press, 2003. xvi + 232 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95)

CARL E. SWANSON  
Department of History  
East Carolina University  
Greenville NC 27858-4353, U.S.A.  
<[swansonc@mail.ecu.edu](mailto:swansonc@mail.ecu.edu)>

Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson is the most famous officer in British naval history and the most successful fleet commander during the age of sail. Where and when did Nelson develop the character and courage that transformed him into one of Britain's most enduring national heroes? Admiral Joseph F. Callo, USNR (ret.), thinks the answer can be found in Nelson's 1784-87 Caribbean assignment as commander of HMS *Boreas*. "During those three years," Callo asserts, "some of the most interesting and critical aspects of Nelson's character, qualities that were to carry him to his position as a shaper of history, came to the fore and were reinforced" (p. 14). Callo relentlessly pursues this theme throughout the book. Virtually all of Nelson's experiences in this period – his enforcement of the Navigation Acts, his strained interactions with superior officers and naval administrators, and his relationships with women – are presented as foreshadowing his future greatness.

Hindsight can be a historian's greatest liability. In this case, knowing Nelson's future status as a great admiral weakens Callo's analysis. He tries to demonstrate that Nelson's undistinguished service in the peacetime Caribbean molded him into the hero of Aboukir Bay and Trafalgar. Callo believes Nelson was not merely commanding a frigate in the West Indies; he was getting ready to influence the world. "As he strode the quarterdeck of *Boreas*, Nelson was doing more than pursuing his career; he was preparing to shape history" (p. 18). Such a focus on the future distorts this period in Nelson's life. It also forces Callo to make some rather tenuous comparisons.

Callo's major interpretive problem is that Nelson's Caribbean tour occurred during peacetime. Nelson's place in history resulted from his phenomenal success in battle. Decisive fleet engagements were rare during the age of sail before the 1790s, but Nelson's aggressive and revolutionary tactics won smashing victories in such battles as the Nile and Trafalgar. Nelson demonstrated extraordinary courage and leadership and accepted great risks in these and other engagements. Since there were no enemies to fight in 1784-87, how did Caribbean service nurture Nelson's command and control capabilities? Callo's answer is that Nelson's experiences enforcing the Navigation Acts and his subsequent legal disputes fostered the development of his combat strategies:

Nelson applied elements of his future combat doctrine to his legal conflict with the civilian officials and plantation owners. He began seizing the initiative; then he fought aggressively to the finish. And that developing Nelsonian doctrine served him just as well in the legal arena in the West Indies as it did in later combat situations in the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Atlantic. ... He evaluated circumstances, weighed options, and thoroughly prepared for the moments of truth, whether in combat at sea off Cape Trafalgar or in combat in a West Indies court of law. (pp. 93, 192-93)

Surely, this is a dubious comparison. Seizing American merchantmen did not require the same courage and determination as splitting the French and Spanish line at Trafalgar. The formation of the "Band of Brothers" is not likely to have resulted from this West Indian experience, as Callo suggests on page 192. Arguing a legal case in a West Indian court required preparation and risk (and legal knowledge), but courtroom success required different skills from commanding a fleet in battle. Lord Chief Justice Mansfield and John Adams were two of the best lawyers in Britain and America in the late eighteenth century; would they have made successful admirals?

Callo is on safer ground in seeing this period as especially formative for another important aspect of Nelson's life, his failed marriage and his relationships with women. Nelson was awkward with women and seemingly fell in love with alarming frequency. He met, courted, and married Frances (Fanny) Herbert Nisbet in Nevis during this tour of duty. Callo suggests that the marriage had only a modest chance from the start. The couple had little in common.

More importantly, Nelson placed his naval career above all other interests, including his relationship with Fanny. Callo criticizes Fanny for not providing the enormous psychological support that Nelson required and for being overly concerned about the family's financial position, a subject that worried Nelson as well. Callo is convincing when he states that the marriage is likely to have been doomed even before Lady Emma Hamilton entered Nelson's life, though he is uncertain who bears more responsibility for this failure.

Callo concludes his study by searching for "timeless truths" (p. 191) embedded in Nelson's life. As a retired admiral, he emphasizes the concerns of the American military. Today's armed forces are preoccupied with "political correctness" (p. 192), which limits their willingness "to take risks to carry out their missions" (p. 192). They need to be more like Nelson and seize the initiative and accept risk. Nelson faced a shortage of naval assets to succeed in his West Indian service, and Callo laments that today's U.S. Navy faces the same problem. Callo is probably correct about the enduring truth of naval commanders believing they lack sufficient ships, personnel, and equipment. The first admiral in ancient history probably complained that his government needed to increase the naval budget!

Although Callo's hindsight is a serious weakness, this book will undoubtedly appeal to the legions of readers intrigued by the age of fighting sail. Caribbean scholars will find less of interest, however, as the author provides only basic background information concerning the Caribbean's key role in eighteenth-century European imperialism. The Naval Institute Press is to be congratulated for the book's handsome appearance. The many illustrations complement the text.

*The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United States.* JORGE DUANY. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. 341 pp. (Paper US\$ 15.95)

JUAN FLORES  
Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies  
Hunter College, CUNY  
New York NY 10021, U.S.A.  
<jflores@igc.org>

This new book by Jorge Duany marks a significant contribution to Puerto Rican cultural and historical studies by bringing together, in an admirably coherent articulation, many of the changing conceptions of Puerto Rican

identity as they have been brewing with increasing boldness over the course of several decades. In so doing, he leads us toward a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the “nation” and the historical workings of colonialism. Duany has long excelled as a master of synthesis and intellectual stock-taking, which has meant that his writings go well beyond repetition and summary and include, very importantly, an effort to draw out the implications of new positions, and then raise the stakes.

Duany’s emphasis, in addition to signaling the internal cleavages within the nation along the lines of class, race, gender, age, and other factors, is on the impact of transnationalism, that is, the territorial and cultural division of the Puerto Rican people, and thus the formation and characteristics of the diaspora living in the United States. To his immense credit, he has taken the implications of this geographical and cultural division more seriously than any Island-based, or Island-formed, thinker to date. In this respect he joins important predecessors like Bernardo Vega, César Andreu Iglesias, José Luis González, Pedro Juan Soto, and significantly in more recent years, Arcadio Díaz-Quinones, whose *La memoria rota* (1993) singles out inattention to the diaspora as the most glaring lapse in the prevailing conception of the national history.

While charting in substantive chapters the intricate cultural and political intersections between the United States and Puerto Rico since the beginning of the twentieth century, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move* focuses on the shifts in Puerto Rican identity in light of the migration and diaspora experience. Rather than treating that experience as a mere extension of Island realities, Duany views the diaspora, despite important continuities and re-connections to the Island, as a markedly different location, as a distinctive social context with its own historical dynamic and perspective. Rather than resulting in a tragic sense of loss or existential quandary, as most previous interpretations present the emigration, the diaspora experience has also involved, in important ways, an expansion and enrichment of Puerto Rican cultural and political perspectives. One might add to Duany’s account of the growth and increasing autonomy of the emigrant communities the understanding that what makes the Puerto Rican reality *de allá* different is the result of an altered sociocultural context, meaning significantly the constant interaction with other nationalities. For in social experience, the “transnational” and “hybrid” nature of the Puerto Rican diaspora results from an engagement with U.S. society, not as a monolith but as a complex and vibrant relation among cultural groups, such as, in longstanding Puerto Rican experience, African Americans, Italian Americans and other Latino communities. It is perhaps this reality which accounts for the change, noted by Duany, in the concept of race and blackness among U.S. Puerto Ricans as contrasted with traditional views on the Island.

Most commendable about Duany's analysis is that he portrays not so much a bipolar, dual national location, but above all geographical movement, circular migration, ongoing transnational interaction, what he refers to as *el vaivén* – the nation “on the move.” He takes the well-known story by Luis Rafael Sánchez, “*La guagua aérea*,” as emblematic of this state of flux, this nomadic, on-the-move condition. Here again it is possible to raise the stakes further on Duany's account, for in viewing this *vaivén* he follows the usual tendency of emphasizing those cultural traditions and practices from the Island that are maintained or continued or reproduced in the diaspora – flags, rituals, the *jueyes*<sup>1</sup> on the airbus, the whole array of symbolic baggage from the national culture. However, of equal importance if it is really a back-and-forth, two-directional circulation, are those cultural experiences and values that go in the other direction, from the diaspora to the Island – return migration not just of people but of cultural values, and its impact on the Island. For it is clear that what gets “sent back,” what might be termed the “cultural remittances,” is not just the dominant or mainstream U.S. culture; rather, diaspora identities and cultures also contain subaltern, oppositional qualities, especially as regards such issues as race and gender and poverty and authority, which are therefore often challenging, and unsettling, to the traditional Island concept of the national culture.

In addition to its probing chapters on earlier instances of cultural representation in anthropological fieldwork, photography, and institutional cultural policy, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move* thus raises key and very contemporary questions about the complexity of national cultures under globalization, and the symptomatic disconnection between political and cultural nationalism in our time. In his portrayal of the intensely translocal nature of today's Puerto Rican reality, he has established definitively that our response to that nagging old question *¿qué somos y cómo somos?* must necessarily address still another, inescapable question: *¿dónde estamos y hacia dónde vamos?* In this new book Duany shows himself once again to serve as a reliable guide through the thickets of these dense and thorny definitional issues.

#### REFERENCE

DÍAZ-QUIÑONES, ARCADIO, 1993. *La memoria rota: Ensayos sobre cultura y política*. Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Huracán.

1. Land crabs, used in a delicious stew and other “typical” dishes, have a symbolic importance for down-home cooking.

*New York Ricans from the Hip Hop Zone*. RAQUEL Z. RIVERA. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. (Paper US\$ 22.95)

HALBERT BARTON  
Department of Anthropology  
Long Island University  
Brooklyn NY 11201, U.S.A.  
<hbarton@liu.edu>

On March 3, 2003, hundreds of people (mostly Puerto Rican and of every hue) crowded into the performance space of the Julia de Burgos cultural center in El Barrio to sing the praises of a book in which they – mostly young, black and Latino men and women – could see themselves reflected in a positive, yet lovingly critical, light. The book party for *New York Ricans in the Hip Hop Zone* made evident Rivera's success in affirming the cultural values and achievements of young Puerto Ricans who have not only grown up in the age of hip-hop but were among its primary builders, architects, and creative visionaries. The enthusiastic turnout says a great deal about her skills as a researcher even as she exposed ways in which New York Puerto Rican hip-hop artists have been complicit with familiar problems of race, sex, and class discrimination.

Scholarly literature on the lives of Puerto Rican youth in New York City has not been widely available. In 1995, Philippe Bourgois published a hair-raising monograph on Puerto Rican involvement in crack cocaine trade in East Harlem and made nary a mention of cultural creativity as a source of meaning and renewal. Rivera's book about struggling hip-hop artists makes a powerful complement and counterpoint to Bourgois's work by foregrounding what these artists have done to turn the depressing lumps of coal in their socioeconomic conditions into diamonds of creativity.

On the music literature, there has emerged an ever-expanding corpus on hip-hop since 1995, most of it with "black only" assumptions about its origins. Very little of the scholarly literature has paid any sustained attention to the variety of ethnic groups present in the core of the hip-hop zone from its inception. Exceptions include groundbreaking works by Nancy Guevara and Juan Flores (see Perkins 1996), upon which Rivera has built her analysis. Flores, for instance, provided a distinguished prelude (2000) to Rivera's work, which follows and extends his argument that the urban Puerto Rican experience on the Island and in the diaspora ranges from bomba (the oldest) to hip-hop (the newest) as valid expressions of Puerto Rican cultural identity. Rivera traces the formation of an emergent authenticity: hip-hop is not an alien imposition (artifact of American cultural imperialism), but rather part of, and an extension of, Puerto Rican cultural experience, and should be acknowledged

and embraced as such (p. 184). This book fills a void in the literature on the Latino, specifically Puerto Rican, presence in the core of hip-hop culture, the matrix of the South Bronx, as well as Puerto Rican neighborhoods throughout New York City, such as East Harlem, Bushwick, and Bed-Stuy.

The main argument and focus of the book concerns the multicultural origins of hip-hop, especially the role of Puerto Ricans as active creators of hip-hop cultures and not just consumers, tag-alongs, or wannabes. Rivera shows how the music industry tends to label art forms as black or white, and she discusses the consequences of identifying hip-hop as an exclusively African-American product. Rivera recounts how English-dominant Puerto Rican rappers have defied the racial binary and have resisted being ghettoized in the marketplace by finding locally acceptable ways to affirm their roots without “pimping” their ethnic identity. In the introductory chapters, she describes how African Americans and Puerto Ricans in New York City have come to live side by side over several generations, playing together as kids, going to school together, socializing and intermarrying. Hip-hop culture – encompassing, but not limited to the activities of rapping, deejaying, breakdancing, and writing graffiti – was what kids in the City did for fun and self-expression, synonymous with “playing outside” (p. 1).

Part One, “A Historical Narrative” looks at the history of Puerto Ricans in hip-hop. What is most valuable and insightful in this section is the way Rivera traces the history of the tension-filled, yet mutually beneficial, “alliance of survival” (pp. 25-27; quoting Andres Torres) between African Americans and Puerto Ricans and identifies the forces that brought them together – a common experience of economic and social marginalization. Rivera locates the Puerto Rican presence in hip-hop in a cultural historical context of migration and diaspora, and traces the living roots of Puerto Rican cultural creativity to centuries-old traditions of music, dance, and wordplay. Moreover, she locates Puerto Ricans in hip-hop’s core within the context of an African diaspora with many strands leading to New York from virtually every corner of the Caribbean and in connection to both West African and African American cultures. This section could have been enriched by a more historically informed discussion of the pioneers of black/Puerto Rican dialogue, such as writer Luis Pales-Matos, archivist Arturo Schomburg, and musician Willie Bobo.

In Part Two, “Topics at the Turn of the Century,” Rivera provides a historical grounding for the cultural-textual analysis of hip-hop and looks at the rise of Latin/a icons (real and imagined) in the hip-hop zone, including tropes such as the Latin *mami* fetish (imagined as a “butta pecan” flavor) and her local counterpart, the *morena* or *sista* (imagined as “chocolate” flavor). She looks closely at how these icons are configured, performing a thorough textual analysis of rap lyrics, video imagery, and the testimonials of hip-hop enthusiasts. She also discusses the “Latin boom” in popular music (led by newly minted superstars such as Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and Marc



Anthony) in relation to what has been going on with music that is popular among Puerto Rican youth in New York City (pp. 116-19). She describes the alienation involved in commercialization and the resistance by some, including women rappers such as Gloria "Hurricane Gee" Rodriguez and Caridad "La Bruja" de la Luz, who refuse to bow to media stereotypes in order to make money. Rivera has well documented the reluctance among the elites to acknowledge and accept the extent of Puerto Rican participation in hip-hop culture in controversies over the proposal to name a street in the Bronx after Christopher "Big Pun" Rios (pp. 178-84), and the sexual assaults at the Puerto Rican parade in 2000 (pp. 182-84), an unfortunate event that fed into stereotypes about the malevolent influence of hip-hop, especially involving the degradation of women in rap lyrics and video imagery.

Over a seven-year period (1994-2001), Rivera conducted more than fifty interviews of Puerto Rican hip-hop artists and activists, which were originally published in local hip-hop magazines and community newspapers. While commercially successful artists such as Fat Joe and the late Big Pun have received considerable media attention, Rivera also interviewed lesser-known artists, such as La Bruja and Hurricane Gee, who are arguably just as vital to the scene, but have not received wide recognition. Yet Rivera goes beyond giving voice to her informants; she is not simply a third-person observer holding up a bullhorn. She is clearly writing from the standpoint of a hip-hop community, or as she prefers, a "zone," i.e. nimbly navigating cultural intersections where many people from the African diaspora meet (building on Paul Gilroy's notion of the "black Atlantic"). Even though her primary voice is not that of a full participant in hip-hop art forms, she overtly places herself in the text as a light-skinned Latina hip-hop enthusiast.

Rivera opens up topics that call for further exploration through an ethnography of music-making and culture-in-process. First, as the title suggests, the New York Ricans who speak here are "from" the hip-hop zone, not "in" the zone. This distinction is significant because there is very little ethnographic description of the everyday lived realities of New York Ricans, including musicians. As such, the sociology presented here is more of an oral history/testimonial variety, where the immediate social context is rendered secondary or irrelevant. It is more a study of music reception, along the lines of Aparicio (1998), than of making music in context. Its chief concern is with how the music is perceived by the general public and the Puerto Rican community in particular. Thus, Rivera leaves us in the realm of reception theory, where our main task is to become more enlightened consumers of hip-hop cultural products. There are more auspicious horizons to be explored; for example, where future researchers, Rivera included, might lead us in the hip-hop zone is the ongoing everyday activity through which hip-hop and Puerto Rican cultures are conjured and reproduced through performance. There are a couple of ethnographic vignettes that hint at what could be expanded



on; most prominent are: recounting her anxieties about meeting her black boyfriend's mom (pp. 122-23) and a glorious "wedding of the millennium" (pp. 235-39, in the appendix) in which two Puerto Rican hip-hop artists walk down the aisle to exchange vows to a bomba beat played on traditional goat-skin barrel drums. Such snippets of intercultural dialogue in action deserve more sustained attention in future works.

This book is conceptually challenging, but Rivera does an admirable job of making intelligible the nuances of identity formation in the Big Apple. For those with any interest in the lives of young Puerto Ricans in New York and the origins of hip-hop, the book will be impossible to put down, and it's guaranteed to provoke lively debate in classes on popular culture, Africana studies, Puerto Rican studies, and the cultural sociology of identity.

#### REFERENCES

APARICIO, FRANCES R., 1998. *Listening to Salsa: Gender, Latin Popular Music and Puerto Rican Cultures*. Hanover NH: Wesleyan University Press.

BOURGOIS, PHILIPPE, 1995. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

FLORES, JUAN, 2000. *From Bomba to Hip-Hop: Puerto Rican Culture and Latino Identity*. New York: Columbia University Press.

PERKINS, WILLIAM ERIC, 1996. *Droppin' Science: Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

*The Cuban Filmography, 1897 through 2001*. ALFONSO J. GARCÍA OSUNA. Jefferson NC: McFarland & Company, 2003. vii + 215 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

ANN MARIE STOCK  
Reves Center for International Studies  
College of William & Mary  
Williamsburg VA 23187-8795, U.S.A.  
<amstoc@wm.edu>

As the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, soon after the Lumière brothers impressed French audiences with their innovative *cinematographe*, moving pictures arrived in Cuba. Cubans embraced this new form of expres-

sive culture from the outset, and remain ardent film fans more than a century later. Films draw large audiences whether shown in theaters, in cultural institutes, in educational settings, on television or even in open-air spaces.

The triumph of the Revolution in Cuba framed expressive culture in close-up, and cinema experienced a rebirth. Cinema was designated as a central means of implementing the new ideology, and the establishment of the Instituto Cubano de Artes e Industrias Cinematográficas (ICAIC) constituted an important step toward creating and circulating Revolutionary representations. Cubans were able to see their own faces and places reflected on the screen, as local filmmakers worked together to create a cinematic language appropriate for the nation in transition. Some filmmakers, such as Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Julio García Espinosa, brought their training and experience from stays in Italy and elsewhere. Others, like Fernando Pérez and Orlando Rojas, learned to make films by working alongside their more experienced colleagues. Early in its history, ICAIC began fostering the development of a new film language, one designed to communicate with local audiences in Havana as well as across the island. The award-winning documentary, *For the First Time* (Octavio Cortázar),<sup>1</sup> captures the wonder of rural movie viewers when the first mobile cinema arrives in their village.

The challenge for this first generation of Revolutionary filmmakers was to develop a unique cinematic language appropriate for the society they were portraying and in a sense creating. In order to do so, they worked in three principal modes, documentary production, feature filmmaking, and animation. Cuban filmmakers sought to develop a film language unique to their own circumstances. Rather than relying on Hollywood codes, they designed form and content with the new society in mind. Central to this innovative film language were an emphasis on local issues and individuals, a commitment to educating, in addition to entertaining, viewers, and the employment of film to foment social justice and document the accomplishments of the Revolution. Specific works from the early years of ICAIC production illustrate these aims: *The Art of Cigars* (Alea) captures the beauty of the cigar-making tradition and features the artists who select leaves, roll tobacco, and sort and label cigars; *NOW!* (Santiago Álvarez) reveals the violence inherent in racism as depicted on U.S. film footage; *Newsreel 49* heralds the beginning of Cuba's Revolutionary cinema in documenting the founding of ICAIC. Rates of production increased dramatically during the early years of Revolutionary cinema, as did the international renown of Cuban films.

For the past forty-five years, Cuba's film institute has trained, engaged, and inspired filmmakers and film organizations across the region and beyond.

1. This documentary and the others mentioned in this review are available for purchase from Cuban Cinema Classics. For more information, and to place orders, consult the website at <[www.wm.edu/cubancinemaclassics](http://www.wm.edu/cubancinemaclassics)>.

Early on, Cuba became a model for other countries, with Havana serving as the film capital of Latin America and Third World countries. Through the International Festival of New Latin American Cinema, held in Havana each December, Latin American filmmakers collaborated with one another and disseminated their work to other filmmakers, festival directors, scholars, and film aficionados around the world. This event contributed significantly to the development of the regional film movement of New Latin America Cinema. Even today, the festival remains the crucial gathering for Latin American filmmakers and others interested in the cinema of this region. It has recently engendered other film festivals on the island (Festival de Cine Pobre in Jibara, Exhibición de Nuevos Realizadores in Havana, Festival del Documental in Santiago de Cuba) and in New York (Havana Film Festival). In addition to fomenting and disseminating Latin American cinema, Cuba has taken the lead in training young filmmakers. The Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión (EICTV) has supported aspiring media makers from Cuba, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and elsewhere, preparing them to become leaders in their home countries by making films, establishing and enhancing national film institutes, and serving as mentors for others. Similarly, the Fundación del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, founded by Gabriel García Márquez and located just outside Havana, brings together individuals committed to Latin American cinema and culture.

Whereas collaboration between Cuban and U.S. organizations has been difficult over the past several decades, the cultural sphere – cinema in particular – has served as an important channel for engagement. ICAIC has worked with numerous U.S. organizations, sending Cuban films to festivals in Chicago, New York, Miami, and elsewhere, facilitating visits of Cuban filmmakers with university groups and their participation in conferences and other film events, and sharing expertise with foundations and organizations such as the Sundance Institute.

For readers of English, Michael Chanan's (2004) *Cuban Cinema* has been the principal reference. It remains the most comprehensive and useful English-language book devoted to this subject, for *The Cuban Filmography* jettisons much of Cuba's rich film history. Little or no mention is made of the creation of a new film language, the importance of Cuban cinema as a model for Latin America, the role of Havana as a regional film capital, or of extensive Cuba-U.S. film collaborations. García Osuna acknowledges the limitations inherent in any comprehensive study and confesses his status as an outsider (his area of principal expertise is medieval Spain). He then goes on to sum up the history of Cuban cinema in thirty-some pages and provide a list of "significant" works along with production credits and descriptions of varying lengths.

One comes away with little sense of Cuba's contribution to local, regional, and international cinema. This may be due to the decision to rely extensively on secondary sources rather than on interviews with the filmmakers

themselves and others working within the Cuban industry. It may also be due to the First World lens through which he views Cuba's film tradition, a lens that sets "our" traditions as the ruler by which "the other" is measured, as evidenced in statements like the following, taken from page 6:

There is a real sense in which Cuban films are immediately distinguishable from those of the United States or Europe. In this sense, they seem not primitive, perhaps, but innocent, naïve in a disturbing way, almost juvenile. This may be due precisely to the rejection of immoral Western perspectives that justify exploitation and injustice; in a compulsive way, many a Cuban filmmaker returns to a limited world of experience, of simple good vs. evil, black and white situations bred in a world of questionable truths. Even when the filmmaker questions these truths, he does not invalidate them.

*The Cuban Filmography* leaves open the road for subsequent studies carried out by scholars engaged with the island context, involved with Cuban practitioners, and informed by postcolonial critical praxis.

#### REFERENCE

CHANAN, MICHAEL, 2004. *Cuban Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. [Orig. 1985.]

*Contact Englishes of the Eastern Caribbean*. MICHAEL ACETO & JEFFREY P. WILLIAMS (eds.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2003. xx + 322 pp. (Cloth US\$ 120.00).

GENEVIÈVE ESCURE  
Department of English  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis MN 55405, U.S.A.  
<escur001@umn.edu>

In this valuable collection the Eastern Caribbean is defined broadly since four of twelve chapters cover areas located in the Western Caribbean. Aceto and Williams justify this extension on the grounds that the Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos, and the Virgin Islands are underrepresented in current linguistic descriptions.

Two chapters deal with Bahamian varieties from very different perspectives: Becky Childs, Jeffrey Reaser, and Walt Wolfram examine the sociohistorical background of two separate communities – one black, one white – on the island of Grand Abaco, concluding that there is bilateral accommodation in the usage of phonological features in the two enclaves. In contrast, Helean McPhee offers a more static depiction of TMA auxiliaries in a generalized Bahamian (supported by a Minimalist approach). Examples are attributed to various islands and derived from “introspective data,” but there is no reference to individual speakers and their ethnic, social, age, or gender affiliations, as is done in the previous study (Childs *et al.*). Omitting to control for external variables may be the reason why auxiliary sequential orders vary so widely (e.g., modals may precede or follow aspect markers, *did* and *bin* occur in different positions).

Cecilia Cutler provides a rare overview of the sociolinguistic situation in the Turks and Caicos (a chain of islands that geographically prolong the Bahamas). Phonological and syntactic features collected on the island of Grand Turk suggest an acrolectal variety, not surprising when one considers the island’s Bermudian heritage. Although Cutler quotes demographic data indicating that the white population amounted to only 5 percent of the Grand Turk population in 1999, no information is given on the racial background of the fifteen informants. The historical approach adopted by Robin Sabino, Mary Diamond, and Leah Cockcroft to study Virgin Islands varieties involves comparing several corpora spanning four decades (and including recent performance data). No appreciable shift toward Standard English is found, at least in the case of plural marking.

The remainder of the volume deals with the Eastern Caribbean (Anguilla, Barbuda, Dominica, Carriacou, and Barbados). Two chapters address issues that are peripheral to linguistic analyses: Beverley Bryan and Rosalind Burnette investigate teachers’ subjective attitudes toward language use in Dominica. This approach is somewhat problematic because opinion surveys are treated as if they were facts. Joan Fayer illustrates cultural syncretism in folk holiday performances of Shakespeare (the *Mas*) in Carriacou. Linguists would have liked examples of the “deviations from the standard text” and “verbal eloquence” mentioned in passing on p. 219.

Finally, Jeffrey Williams, Paul Garrett, Ron Kephart, and Gerard Van Herk provide linguistic sketches of varieties spoken on different islands, whereas David Sutcliffe compares three suprasegmental systems.

Jeffrey Williams reviews the historical antecedents and social stratification on Anguilla, and focuses on a well-defined white (or rather “clear-skinned”) community (Island Harbour) that apparently developed its own “Webster dialect.” This variety is now shifting toward Anguillian Creole English.

Michael Aceto presents a brief analysis of varieties spoken on Barbuda. He finds a “startling” variation in this small island (of approximately 1,500

residents). His statement that “one does not typically expect to find such a small community as that in Barbuda to reveal features typically associated with two or more of the lects” (p. 124) may appear surprising, in view of the extensive stylistic variation amply documented in many creole communities. The major part of his article is devoted to a discussion of alternative systems of classification of creole languages (primarily ones that would not rely on the creole continuum perspective).

Paul Garrett’s title, “*An English Creole that isn’t...*,” suggests a definitive answer to the issue of the linguistic status of the vernacular English spoken in St. Lucia. In fact, this variety turns out not to be readily classifiable. In a well-documented, substantial survey, Garrett differentiates between features “attributable to CEC, Kweyol (French-based), or both” (p. 166-72), and others “attributable to Kweyol influence only” (p. 172-76). But his claim that Kweyol influence was prevalent in the development of the St. Lucian vernacular is not altogether convincing. For example, Garrett claims that the existential constructions *it hav* or *de hav* are calqued on Kweyol *i ni* or *la ni* (pp. 170-71). In fact, *i hav/it hav/de hav* is quite common in English-based creoles with no historical connection to French, both in basilects and mesolects. The same applies to the claim that *ogen* “again” has derived its meaning of “still, else” from French Creole *anko*; this meaning is also widespread in English creoles.

Ron Kephart provides a brief overview of prominent morphosyntactic and phonological features of the Carriacou local variety that evokes a mesolect. Kephart, like Garrett, attributes the origin of several features to contiguous French Creole varieties (Patwa). But *i av*, as well as *how you neim* also occur in many creoles not influenced by French varieties.

Gerard Van Herk provides a comprehensive evaluation of Bajan (Barbadian), raising more particularly the issue of whether Bajan is “closer to English,” “decreolized,” or “mesolectal,” as stated in earlier analyses. He argues for the existence of basilectal forms, such as preverbal anterior morphemes (*bin*, *did*, *had*), unmarked past, and a preverbal imperfective (habitual, continuative) that he writes *da* – the latter represented with a phonetic schwa. (This may be confusing since other English-based varieties differentiate between progressive/habitual *de* and a copula/focus marker *da*.) Basilectal forms are restricted to elderly speakers, whereas younger Barbadians appear to be close to a “middle-class African-American” variety (p. 263). But why would this acrolect be African-American rather than a Caribbean Standard?

Finally, David Sutcliffe examines the existence of putative tonal patterns in Barbadian, Trinidadian, and Guyanese, with reference to contrastive pairs such as *sísta* “female sibling” vs. *sistá* “nun” in Bajan and Guyanese that suggest lexical tone.